Introduction

The term “homosexuality” is itself problematic when applied to ancient cultures, inasmuch as neither Greek nor Latin possesses any one word covering the same semantic range as the modern concept. The term is adopted in this volume not out of any conviction that a fundamental identity exists between ancient and modern practices or self-conceptions, but as a convenient shorthand linking together a range of different phenomena involving same-gender love and/or sexual activity. To be sure, classical antiquity featured a variety of discrete practices in this regard, each of which enjoyed differing levels of acceptance depending on the time and place. The pedagogical pederasty common among Greek men and freeborn adolescents was not the same as relationships between men and adolescent slaves or male prostitutes. “Platonic love” was not the same as a physically consummated relationship. Age-differential pairings were not the same as age-equal relations, whether between adults or adolescents. Same-gender love among males was not the same as that among females. Nevertheless, there are clear links among these disparate phenomena that justify their treatment in a single volume, since the ancient sources themselves frequently treat them together as social practices that were comparable and easily confused, though not identical. Even in modern society, “homosexual” is a somewhat unsatisfactory and abstract catch-all for a plethora of practices and subcultures: flaming queens, leather daddies, chickenhawks, bull dykes, lipstick lesbians, and Log Cabin Republicans could not be more different, but even they find it convenient to posit a certain affinity in counterdistinction to the dominant heterosexual culture.
Sexual Preference

The field of Gay Studies has, virtually since its inception, been divided between "essentialists," those who believe in an archetypal pattern of same-gender attraction that is universal, transhistorical, and transcultural, and "social constructionists," those who hold that patterns of sexual preference manifest themselves with different significance in different societies and that no essential identity exists between practitioners of same-gender love in, for instance, ancient Greece and postindustrial Western society.¹ Some social constructionists have even gone so far as to deny that sexual preference was a significant category for the ancients or that any kind of subculture based on sexual object-choice existed in the ancient world.²

Close examination of a range of ancient texts suggests, however, that some forms of sexual preference were, in fact, considered a distinguishing characteristic of individuals. Many texts even see such preferences as inborn qualities and thus "essential" aspects of human identity: the earliest philosophical account of male sexual passivity, from the pre-Socratic philosopher Parmenides (10.5.134–35), traces it to a failure of male and female seed to blend properly at the moment of conception. Other medical writers consider effeminacy in men and masculinity in women to be genetically determined (5.15). Aristotle (5.13) and his followers (5.16) believe that the desire to be penetrated anally arises from physiological deformity, either a congenital defect or something occurring through "abuse" as a child. Similarly, physiognomic writers (10.6–7) hold that effeminacy and sexual passivity can be betrayed by visible physical traits, implying that the behavior stems from an organic etiology. Later astrological texts (10.38–41) consider all manner of sexual preferences to be determined by the position of heavenly bodies at one's birth. The Roman fabulist Phaedrus (9.5) and the Greek comic poet Aristophanes (as recorded in Plato, 5.7.189–93) both produce mythological accounts explaining the origin of different sexual orientations in the prehistory and creation of the human race. In the context of these theories, it should not surprise us to see the late Greek novelist Longus introduce a character as "a pederast by nature" (10.19.11).

Even our earliest literary source for homosexuality, the iambic poet Archilochus in the early seventh century B.C.E., speaks of men with different natures and therefore different sexual preferences (1.1). Somewhat later, Theognis seems conscious of boy-love as a distinctive lifestyle not shared

¹. One of the most systematic expositions of an essentialist view is in the work of Boswell (1980); Halperin (1990) 15–53 provides an eloquent social constructionist response, which is in turn countered by Thorp (1992). See also the valuable collection of essays by Stein (1992), including Boswell's response to his critics, and the survey of Lambert and Szesnat (1984).
by all men (1.73, 1.78) and compares it favorably to love of women (1.77). Similarly, the early-fifth-century lyric poet Pindar contrasts men devoted to women with those who appreciate boys (1.85) and generalizes that "different loves tickle the fancies of different folks" (1.86). An interesting black-figure pyxis from the mid-sixth century (figs. 4a, b), perhaps used for storing cosmetics, displays three panels corresponding to the same three erotic combinations conceptualized by Aristophanes in Plato's Symposium: man-woman, woman-woman (4a), and man-boy (4b). In Wasps, Aristophanes assures his audience that his tastes are not pederastic (3.12), and comedy generally ridicules those who seem exclusively or excessively devoted to boys or men (3.11, 3.14, 3.19–20, 3.23–24, 3.31), as if to imply that their preferences were not the norm, but they were nevertheless a recognizable group in ancient Athens. Roman satirical texts from authors such as Petronius (9.14), Martial (9.25), and Juvenal (9.39) recognize that some men were genuinely incapable of sex with women.

During the Roman period, sexual preference came to be contested as an object of active debate between those who preferred women and those who liked boys. In some cases the comparison is complimentary to both and reflects indifference (7.14, 7.27), but in most cases partisans praise boys as natural and undemanding (6.63, 6.70, 7.25) or women for their mutual pleasure (8.19). The most extensive and formalized debates are recorded by later authors such as Plutarch (10.3), Achilles Tatius (10.18), and an imitator of Lucian (10.37): the parties sometimes become quite heated in their ridicule and even disgust for the other position. These late texts represent the most polarized development of a fundamental contrast in identities that in some form goes back to our earliest literary evidence from archaic Greece.

Not only was there a widespread perception that individuals were characterized by their sexual preference, but there is considerable evidence that like-minded individuals congregated in social venues conducive to pursuing their mutual interests. In early Greece, athletics was practiced in the nude at least in part to showcase the beauty of young male bodies in motion:3 this aesthetic dimension of athletics is confirmed by the characteristic preference for male nudes in archaic and classical sculpture. It should therefore come as no surprise that the palaestra (a privately owned wrestling school, as opposed to public gymnasia) was a favorite gathering place for upper-class adolescent boys and their older admirers (3.11–12, 5.4–5). Pindar (1.86)

3. There has been much discussion of the interrelation between athletic and artistic nudity, both of which may be outgrowths of Greek initiatory practice, as was, in some views, Greek pederasty. See especially the discussions of Bonfante (1989), Stewart (1997) 24–42, and Golden (1998) 65–69; the last gives a brief survey of previous scholarship on the question. On the general nexus between initiation, pederasty, and Greek athletics, see Scanlon (2002) and Hubbard (2003).
makes it clear that athletic success would render a boy or young man more attractive to potential lovers of both genders and all age-groups; Xenophon’s *Symposium* (5.8) is set at a party the wealthy Callias gives in honor of the Panathenaic victory of his beloved, the adolescent athlete Autolycus. Gymnastic venues are especially frequent in visual representations of courtship on Greek vases (see especially figs. 11, 12b, 24b, c; the strigils hanging on the wall in figs. 16, 19, and 20 may also suggest a gymnastic background).

Artistic evidence also suggests that the symposium, or drinking party, was a locus of homosexual admiration, courtship, and even sexual acts (see figs. 5a, b for the latter, fig. 23 for the former). The tragedian Sophocles ogled cute serving boys (2.21.609), and in myth Ganymede was brought to Olympus to be the cupbearer of the gods and Zeus’ favorite. As figure 23 shows, serving boys would often tend to their duties naked. That Plato and Xenophon both set dialogues on love (5.7–8) at such gatherings is significant. Most male homoerotic lyric poetry was probably intended for delivery in such a setting. 1.85, 1.88, and 1.89 are skolia (drinking songs) that may have been meant for recitation at banquets as an expression of homosocial values common to men of the upper class.

Less elaborate social venues also existed for fulfilling basic physical appetites. The comic poets (3.19, 3.24) refer to isolated spots on the outskirts of Athens frequented by men looking for other men, and a massive conglomeration of pederastic graffiti at a single location on the island of Thera (2.22) suggests an established gathering place for men and boys. That such discreet meeting places existed implies extensive word-of-mouth networks. In Rome, even as early as 200 B.C.E., a certain street was known to be frequented by male prostitutes specializing in both active and passive roles (7.10). Some men are reported to have sought company among sailors in a district near the Tiber river (8.3) and others were even picked up in the public baths (9.14.92). Juvenal (9.39.132–33) refers to scratching one’s head with a single finger as a sign used by men of homosexual inclinations. Such evidence has convinced some critics that Rome featured a fairly well-developed homosexual subculture, despite the generally negative valuation that society placed on any man or boy who ever adopted a passive role.⁵

Varieties of Same-Gender Attraction

It is often assumed that same-gender relationships followed a stereotypical pattern and set of protocols in ancient society: in classical Greece this would

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⁴ On the pederastic and initiatory significance of the symposium, see especially Levine (1985) 176–80, Winterling (1990), and Bremmer (1990).

⁵ See Richlin (1993) and Taylor (1997). However, see the objections of C. A. Williams (1999) 218–24.
take the form of pedagogical pederasty associating a man (usually before the age of marriage) and a freeborn boy, while in Rome, a merely physical relationship between an adult citizen and a young slave. The texts, however, reveal a much wider diversity of relationships in terms of both age and status. While these "non-normative" relationships are sometimes attacked in the texts as eccentric or inappropriate, even the "normative" forms of same-gender involvement are treated with hostility by certain sources. What the evidence establishes is that a variety of behaviors occurred with sufficient frequency to be worthy of notice, even if disapprobatory.

Greek homosexual activity, despite popular misconceptions, was not restricted to man-boy pairs. Vase-painting shows numerous scenes where there is little or no apparent difference in age between the young wooer and his object of courtship (see figs. 12a, b, 24a, b, c), as well as graphic scenes of sexual experimentation between youths (see figs. 8, 15). Early poets such as Theognis (1.41, 1.65) and Pindar (1.86) make it clear that youths were attracted to and slept with other youths of the same age. Plato tells us that the young Charmides' beauty provoked the admiration and love of everyone present, even the youngest boys (5.4.154). In the Phaedrus, Socrates quotes the proverb "youth delights youth" to imply that young men would prefer companions of their own age to older lovers (5.9.240). Xenophon shows Critobulus in love with Cleinias, a youth of the same age or perhaps even a bit older (5.8.4.23). Timarchus' lover, Misgolas, appears to be the same age (4.7.49). In the Hellenistic period Meleager attests that boys were attractive to boys (6.40), and Quintilian worries about older boys corrupting younger boys in Roman schools (9.34). If interpretations of Alcman's First Maidens' Song (1.4) as a ritualized lesbian betrothal are correct, the two young women paired in that performance appear to be age-equal, in which case female homoeroticism also did not always conform to the age-differential stereotype (for artistic evidence, see figs. 3, 4a, 9, 13).

Although a youth's attractiveness was thought by many to cease with the growth of his beard and body hair, the window of attraction varied to some degree according to individual preferences. The youths named as men's favorites in Athenian oratory (Theodotus in 4.4, Timarchus in 4.7, and Aristion in 4.10) are all meirakia, a term generally used of those in the eighteen to twenty-one age-group. Philosophers, in fact, preferred older youths, who were capable of a higher level of intellectual engagement (5.7.181, 5.24, 10.10); the early Stoics thought that a suitable beloved could be as old as twenty-eight (5.25). Aristotle (5.14) claims that relationships based on love of character often continued after the loss of the beloved's youthful beauty. Xenophon reports that Menon, a Thessalian general, had a bearded beloved (2.6); similarly, Philostratus praises his beloved's beard (10.29). In the Hellenistic period, some lovers swore continued attraction even well into their loved one's adulthood (6.65–66, 6.89); others preferred boys as young
as twelve (6.59–60, 6.73–74). In Roman times, we have more than one account of soldiers being the object of sexual attention by superior officers (7.3, 7.21); the elderly emperor Galba is said to have preferred mature and masculine men (9.15), and Nero supposedly “married” a freedman named Doryphorus (9.7). However, other wealthy Romans are reported to have had their favorite slaves castrated in order to maintain their youthful appearance artificially (9.4, 9.10).

The fact that some youths continued to take the part of the beloved even after reaching physical maturity raises the question whether it was because they derived pleasure from the passive role. Medical texts certainly recognize that some men did so (5.16, 10.5). Aristophanes invokes the tragic poet Agathon as the paradigm of a man who cultivated a youthful and even feminine appearance in order to remain sexually attractive to other adult men (3.14); later biographical sources report that he was the lifelong companion of Pausanias, who appears as his lover in Plato’s Symposium. Theopompus (3.24) suggests that Agathon was not the only such character. However, excessive concern with maintaining an attractive appearance was not necessarily a sign of sexual passivity, but could also have been meant to make an active pederast more appealing to boys, as suggested by Pherecrates’ effeminate perfume-seller (3.23) or Xenophon’s Critobulus (5.8.4). Indeed, plays such as Aristophanes’ Knights (3.1–10) and Clouds (3.11) show characters alternating between active and passive roles, suggesting that the dividing line between lover and beloved was perhaps not always so distinct; compare 6.76 and 6.84 from the Hellenistic age.

In the Roman period we hear from a variety of texts about adult men who preferred the passive role. The comic poets and satirists tell us that there were male prostitutes who specialized in taking the active role in anal sex for the benefit of such men (7.10, 7.30–31, 9.20, 9.24, 9.39). Martial refers to a man who used his slave for the same purpose (9.21). Seneca tells us that one Hostius Quadra set up a room full of distorting mirrors to make the organs of men penetrating his various bodily orifices appear larger (9.9). The desire to be penetrated is often associated with playing a woman’s role: the emperors Nero (9.7) and Elagabalus (10.22–23) are both reported to have pretended they were female in the company of their masculine favorites. Ovid (8.20) ridicules husbands who make themselves more hairless than their wives in order to attract other men; the comic poet Novius (7.32) tells us of men who depilate their buttocks to smooth the way. An invective poem attributed to Vergil (8.3) associates ritual transvestism at the Cotytia with sexual passivity; Apuleius (10.15) narrates a story about effeminate eunuch priests of Cybele who lure a young peasant into their midst and then force him to be serviced orally by the whole troupe. One should not necessarily assume from the number of references that such behavior was more common in Rome than it was in Greece: it may be that sexual passivity on the
part of free citizen males was even more offensive to Roman sensibilities (for which it was not acceptable even in free youths) and hence became a potent satirical topos for moral disorder and inversion of values, as is suggested by the uniformly hostile tone of the sources.

Greek and Latin shared a term for such men: *kinaidos/cinaedus*. It may have been used as early as Archilochus (1.3). Its first certain attestations in Aristophanes (*Clouds* 448 and *Birds* 429) are not distinctively sexual; it just appears as one of many terms of abuse for rascality. But by the fourth century its meaning is more specific: the orator Aeschines abuses Demosthenes as one, and Plato has Socrates refer to their life as "terrible and shameful and to be pitied" (5.6). The exact meaning of the word, however, is still disputed: while some Roman texts clearly associate it with sexual passivity (e.g., *7.44, 8.3, 9.14.21, 9.16.2319b*), Martial associates it with eunuchs (9.28), and other texts, with adulterers (7.26, 7.46). Cicero said Verres was "masculine among women" and an "unchaste little lady among men" (7.57); similar statements were made concerning Caesar (7.36), suggesting that homosexual passivity and heterosexual promiscuity were not inconsistent. The late astrological writer Firmicus Maternus associates the word with effeminate men who are actors and dancers, but makes it clear that they may be either married heterosexuals or pederasts (10.40). It therefore seems unwise to limit the term *kinaidos/cinaedus* to the sexually passive: its range seems potentially to include anyone who is perceived as sexually excessive or deviant. I have therefore adopted the somewhat unsatisfactory translation "pervert" in numerous passages throughout this volume, inasmuch as that English word combines the same vagueness of reference with an equally strong element of censure and disapproval. The *cinaedi* as a group are too often mentioned to be merely imaginary projections, however embroidered with fiction each individual story may be. Antiquity, like our own society, had its share of sexual dissidents and nonconformists.

Varieties of Moral Judgment

Just as sexual behavior in Greece and Rome was irreducible to any single paradigm, moral judgments concerning the various species of same-gender interaction were far from uniform. The widespread notion that a "general acceptance" of homosexuality prevailed is an oversimplification of a complex *mélangé* of viewpoints about a range of different practices, as is the dogma that a detailed regimen of protocols and conventions distinguished "acceptable" from "unacceptable" homosexual behaviors. There was, in

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7. For the former view, see Boswell (1980) 61–87; the latter view is implied by Foucault (1986).
fact, no more consensus about homosexuality in ancient Greece and Rome than there is today. In these heavily discourse-oriented cultures, as in our own, sexual dissidence was a flash point of ideological contention.

In Greece, suspicion of homosexual relations of any sort seems most pronounced in those genres of discourse that are designed to appeal to the masses’ resentment of sociopolitical elites: iambic poetry (1.1–3), comedy (chapter 3), forensic oratory (chapter 4), and popular street preaching (5.17–18). Such class-based hostility is already evident in our earliest literary evidence for homosexuality, the barbed lampoons of Archilochus (1.1–3), a self-proclaimed bastard and spokesman for the common man. Similarly, comic drama of the fifth and fourth centuries satirizes the excesses and follies of the city’s intellectual and political leaders, typically showing them foiled or defeated by a protagonist who in some sense represents the average citizen. Although there is no question that comic invective holds the greatest scorn for effeminates and/or sexual passives (3.8, 3.10, 3.14, 3.21–24, 3.32), adult effeminacy was merely seen as the most extreme and visible manifestation of an institution (pederasty) that, even when practiced in a “normative” way, effeminized, prostituted, and corrupted adolescents who were one day destined to become the city’s leaders. Active/passive roles were widely imagined as interchangeable (e.g., in Aristophanes’ Knights [3.1–10] or Clouds [3.11]), in part because any active pederast had himself most likely played the passive role at some point in his development. Hence, active boy-lovers are themselves a target of satire (3.7, 3.11–13, 3.18, 3.20, 3.23, 3.27, 3.29, 3.31, 3.33) just as often as men who take a passive role. Boys are frequently accused of being prostitutes, but it is apparent that comedy expands the notion of “prostitution” to encompass virtually all the forms of gift-exchange that characterized traditional pederastic courtship (3.17; compare figs. 4b, 6–8, 16–17, 19–21) and even the offer of entertainment and a fancy meal (3.25–26, 3.30), staples of the upper-class homosocial symposium. In contrast, boys who sell themselves for money out of genuine need are treated more sympathetically (3.9, 3.16).

Athenian forensic oratory also appealed to a mass audience, since its goal was to persuade a jury composed of a cross section of the city’s male citizen population. Arguments based on an opponent’s bad character were commonplace, and charges of prostitution are frequent (4.1, 4.6–8), perhaps appealing to popular suspicions concerning politicians’ venality. However, these charges are never based on any evidence more specific than that a man was known to keep the company of older men in his youth. Although formal legal contracts exchanging such long-term companionship for money were not unknown (4.4.22), merely benefiting from extravagant dinners and entertainment was considered equivalent to a form of payment in oratory (4.7.75–76), as it was in comedy. But even pederastic involvements, whether active or passive, that did not involve prostitution were thought to
prejudice a jury against an opponent, and were thus brought up even when strictly irrelevant to a case (4.2–3, 4.5, 4.10–11, 4.13); the defendant in 4.4, an active pederast, admits his involvement only with the greatest embarrassment and fear that it will prejudice the judges against him.

The sum of this evidence, together with the association of pederasty with upper-class venues like the symposium and wrestling school, suggests that it was primarily an upper-class phenomenon, at least in Athens; only men with a certain amount of wealth, leisure, and education were in a position to provide boys with the attention and courtship gifts they might expect, whether tangible or intangible. The majority of Greek men lived close to the subsistence level and had neither the time nor the wherewithal for such pursuits.

Even within elite intellectual circles there were many Greeks who had their doubts about any physically consummated form of pederasty. Xenophon’s *Memorabilia* (5.1–3) presents a Socrates who cautions his young followers against pederastic involvements; and Xenophon’s *Symposium* (5.8) seems to place a higher valuation on heterosexuality at the end. “Platonic love,” as articulated in Plato’s *Symposium* (5.7) and *Phaedrus* (5.9), attempts to rehabilitate pederastic desire by sublimating it into a higher, spiritual pursuit of Beauty in which the sexual appetite is ultimately transcended. The idea of a chaste pederasty gained currency in other fourth-century authors (4.7.136–57, 4.12, 5.14), and may have some precedent in Spartan customs (2.9–12), but Plato’s last work, the *Laws* (5.10–11), appears to abandon it and present an entirely negative view. Even in the *Phaedrus*, Lysias’ speech and Socrates’ first speech flesh out serious and specific reflections on the harm that the wrong kind of pederasty could do a boy, suggesting that the concept of Platonic love was developed as a response to widespread censure. Texts such as the comic fragment 3.29 show that even in Plato’s own day, some were skeptical whether such a chaste pederasty could exist in reality; later satirical texts (6.48, 9.38, 10.10) take it for granted that these philosophical pretensions were fraudulent covers.

Censure of same-gender relations in Roman culture was differently motivated: class considerations played less of a role, and the inappropriateness of sexual passivity for a Roman male, even during his youth, is the central theme of many texts (7.1–6, 7.9, 7.13, 7.18, 7.21, 7.30–32, 7.34–38, 7.43–44, 7.57–58, 7.60–62, 7.64, 8.1, 8.3, 8.20, 9.3, 9.9, 9.21, 9.30, 9.35–37, 9.39, 10.21–23). Some texts go further and condemn active forms of pederasty, even when practiced with a slave or foreigner: this preference is either impugned as Greek and un-Roman (7.17, 7.48, 7.52–55) or singled out as a sign of luxury and self-indulgence (7.19, 7.59, 9.1, 9.4, 9.10, 9.19–20, 10.1–2, 10.4, 10.8). Roman oratory, like its earlier Greek counterpart, assumes an audience that is generally hostile to all forms of homosexuality, whether active or passive (7.19–20, 7.59–64, 9.2, 9.4, 9.35–37; cf. 10.1–2 for later Greek oratory under the Roman Empire). Despite the libertarian
utterances of some early Stoics (5.21–22), Stoic philosophy of the Roman period was profoundly negative concerning any form of sex that could be considered “against Nature” (9.10–13, 10.1, 10.4, 10.8), a philosophical objection some sources advanced even during the Greek period (4.11, 5.10–11, 5.17.65). On the other hand, comic and satiric authors such as Plautus (7.11–12, 7.15) or Martial (9.22, 9.28, 9.31) did not find fault with pederastic attentions devoted to slaves, just as Aristophanes (3.10) did not. That the only positively valued same-gender relationships were those with slaves (and even those were questioned by some) reveals a culture whose discursive organs were even more uncomfortable with homosexuality than the Greeks’ were, however many members of Roman society may have been involved with its practice.

Power Dynamics

The perception that Greek pederasty usually conformed to an age-differential model with the older partner as active wooer and the younger as the passive object of pursuit has led some scholars to see the active/passive polarity as fundamental to the significance of pederasty as a social institution.\(^8\) That the older partner is typically the insertive agent in sexual acts depicted on Greek vases has led to claims that phallic penetration was an index of sociopolitical empowerment, and that boys, as passive “victims” of penetration (considered isomorphic to exploitation) were parallel to women, slaves, and foreigners as instrumental foils to the adult citizen males who wielded the political franchise and thereby the right to phallic supremacy.

However, one finds little support for this interpretation in the textual evidence, and even the iconographic tradition points toward a different conclusion: most man-boy couples are engaged in frontal and intercrural (i.e., “between the thighs”) penetration, not oral or anal acts, and if anything, it is the man’s awkward and distorted posture that shows signs of discomfort in an attempt to accommodate himself to his younger and usually shorter partner (see figs. 4b, 6–8, 20). The focus of erotic attention is usually not the boy’s anus, but his developing penis, which the lover either fondles (figs. 6, 7, 10a, b, 12a, 20) or gazes at (figs. 17, 23); in other words, the interest is not in the boy as a passive receptacle, but as a young male who is himself budding and maturing into an active agent with sexual capabilities. Boys seemed quite free either to refuse or joyfully to accept men’s advances (see

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8. See Dover (1978) 84–91, 100–109; Halperin (1990) 15–40; Winkler (1990) 45–70. This view is frequently attributed to Foucault (1986), but in fact plays a fairly minor role in his treatment of Greek sexuality: for Foucault, the fundamental dichotomy is between being active (i.e., in control) or passive (i.e., controlled) in relation to one’s own appetites. For a more detailed review of arguments against this position, see Hubbard (1998b) and Davidson (2001).
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figs. 12c, 22 for rejection, figs. 10b, 19, 20 for what is clearly eager acceptance; in addition, a range of responses between outright rejection and full acceptance was available to boys (see Iconographic Conventions, below). Where oral or anal penetration occurs in Attic vase-painting, as might be expected if the point were to emphasize the active partner's power and control, the partners are either heterosexual or age-equal males (see figs. 8, 14, 15; figs. 5a, b actually show an unbearded youth penetrating a bearded man). Indeed, the realization that age-equal activity was not uncommon, as we have shown, profoundly undercuts any interpretation of Greek homosexuality in terms of "victim categories." Figure 24a shows two youths on pedestals, a self-confident musician in contraposto and a hesitant admirer about to offer him a crown; the admirer is on a slightly lower pedestal and bends his head down, as if to express shyness and diffidence.

To the extent that literary texts display a power differential, it is rather to emphasize the powerlessness and even emotional helplessness of the lover and a privileged position of control occupied by the beloved youth: this configuration permeates Greek lyric texts from the archaic to the Hellenistic period (1.32–33, 1.35, 1.38–39, 1.42, 1.45–46, 1.54–55, 1.59–62, 1.64–67, 1.70, 1.72–73, 1.75–76, 1.82–83, 1.85, 6.6, 6.10, 6.12–14, 6.25, 6.31, 6.35–36, 6.39, 6.41–44, 6.56, 6.72; compare also Greek-influenced Roman texts such as 7.50, 8.4, 8.12). Even poems in which a lover congratulates himself on becoming free of a youth’s tyranny (1.40, 1.43, 1.56, 1.69, 1.81) or admonishes the youth to beware of the future (1.49, 1.63, 6.26, 6.29–30, 6.32, 6.45, 6.51, 6.55, 6.68, 6.71, 6.80–81) reflect a sense of desperation on the part of an unsuccessful lover. These protestations should not be dismissed as merely hollow convention.

Whatever advantage an older lover might have in experience, social connections, or verbal charm (see 1.34), the youth had the countervailing power of Beauty on his side, which was a rarer commodity. Simple demographic reckoning tells us that eligible youths in that short-lived, but most desirable, window of efflorescence (from about fourteen to eighteen) were far fewer in number than the adult lovers who might pursue them (Greek men typically did not marry until their thirties). And even among the demographically eligible, many boys would either not be interested or would be closely guarded by their fathers or pedagogues (slave attendants); others would prefer the company of youths closer to their own age (as implied by Socrates’ proverb “youth delights youth”). It was emphatically a seller’s market. Vases seldom show more boys than wooers, but often the reverse (see figs. 4b, 6–8, but fig. 19 does show a crowd of boys); vases often show boys rejecting advances or acting noncommittal (for the former, see figs. 12c, 22; for the latter, see the boys on the far right in figs. 16, 17). Boys like Lysis and Charmides are surrounded by a mob of admirers in Plato’s dialogues (5.4–5), and even the hypothetical boy addressed in Lysias’ and Socrates’ dis-
courses in the *Phaedrus* (5.9) is assumed to have his choice among several lovers and non-lovers (the latter being a less emotionally heated version of the former). Theognis continually complains of his many rivals for Cyrmus’ favor (1.39–40, 1.46–47, 1.52–53, 1.55–56, 1.64–65, 1.81). The young Timarchus certainly had no shortage of older companions who were willing to pay extravagantly for the pleasure of his company (4.7). Lysias’ *Against Simon* (4.4) narrates the conflict of two men who come to blows over a boy’s favor. Plutarch tells us that the adolescent Alcibiades had many lovers who willingly put up with outrageous treatment at his hands, so great was their devotion (2.5). The most desirable boys were precisely those from elite families, like Alcibiades or Timarchus, and the goal of a pedagogical mentorship was not to objectify and subordinate them, but to advance their socialization into the elite male world of the symposium and athletics, and eventually politics and the life of the mind. Indeed, it was to make them as much like their lover as possible, a true mirror image. Only in this sense did a lover have a power over his beloved, but any beloved who did not appreciate the model his lover offered or who did not like the way he was treated in any other respect could easily find another lover, and the evidence is that they frequently did, even with no provocation.

Since our literary remains are overwhelmingly the work of adult men, boys’ authentic voices from antiquity are rare, but two graffiti do appear to be written by boys: 2.22.549 proclaims a boy’s pride in his beauty and pleasure in being courted by men, and 2.23.924 praises his lover’s courage. Plato (5.9.255) views a boy’s reciprocal affection for his lover as a common enough phenomenon to need philosophical explanation; Aristotle (5.12, 5.14) regards such reciprocal love as desirable and not uncommon, even though the source of pleasure each partner would derive from the relationship might be different. That the poets complain about the absence of mutual love more than they celebrate its fulfillment (however, see Asclepiades’ epigram 6.2 or Anacreon’s 1.34) does not disprove its existence; one misses only what one sees that others sometimes possess. The poets’ attention to the power of a beautiful boy’s eyes to attract, captivate, and even inflame (1.35, 1.85, 6.34–35, 6.39–41, 6.44, 6.56, 6.72) suggests that boys also were perceived as active agents of vision and judgment concerning the qualities of their suitors.

If the Greeks’ principal interest in pederasty were as an institutionalized phallic confirmation of the sociopolitical supremacy of adult citizen males, one would expect far more attention to pederastic relationships with slaves, as in Rome, or with lower-class boys. But as we have seen, it was boys of the best families who were most likely to attract admirers. Slaves are relatively seldom mentioned as objects of interest in classical Greek texts, and where they are, it is usually someone else’s slave, as with Anacreon’s interest in Smerdis (1.29) or Sophocles’ in one of Hermesileus’ slaves (2.21.603–4). In Xenophon’s *Symposium* (5.8.4.52–54), the Syracusan entertainer worries
that other men may attempt to sleep with his slave, but has no scruples about sleeping with the boy himself. In Greek comedy, an attractive slave boy is presented as an appropriate object of attention (3.10); we also hear of lower-class youths selling themselves through prostitution (3.9, 3.17). The availability of slaves to their own masters was considered unremarkable, although technically Athenian slaves did enjoy the protection of laws against rape (4.7.15–17); the attention of outsiders to one's slaves was more questionable. Neither slaves nor lower-class boy prostitutes become the object of discursive elaboration or erotic imagination to nearly the same extent as boys of good family who freely choose to enter into a pederastic liaison.9

In the Roman period, however, relationships with slaves received far more attention and became the normative image of pederasty. Some republican sources criticize expenditure on attractive Greek slaves as extravagant and unbefitting Roman simplicity (7.17, 7.19, 7.63); in imperial texts influenced by Stoicism this political critique is replaced by a moral critique of the slave's treatment (9.1, 9.4, 9.10, 9.13). Men's involvement with their own slave boys was frequently objectionable to their wives (see 7.47, 9.14.74–75, 9.31), which may be evidence of considerable personal intimacy and affection in such relationships. Statius' funeral eulogy for the dead slave boy of Flavius Ursus (9.32) illustrates just how deep the emotional attachment might be.

Even in master-slave relations, the dynamic was not necessarily one of unchecked power to dominate: Cicero reportedly complained that his slave Tiro refused his kisses (7.65), and Martial praises as his ideal boy slave one who will take the initiative in lovemaking and "act more like a free man than his master" (9.22). One master calls his slave a friend and companion, comparing his status to that of a Homeric squire serving a warrior-king (6.87). Many slave relationships would not involve the slave's own master, but someone outside the household: while some slaves were clearly vulnerable to threats and abusive treatment from outsiders (9.33), more often they need to be courted and persuaded (6.77). Many slave owners might object to their slaves becoming the object of other men's attentions (9.28).

Roman comedy gives slave characters significant roles and thereby supplies them a fictive voice to express their view of the sexual relationship into which they might be compelled. In Plautus' Rope (7.7), a slave feels fortunate to have a master who does not engage in such practices, and in Pseudolus (7.12), a slave feels humiliated by the implication that he had serviced his master when he was a boy. But earlier in the same play (7.11) an unattractive slave boy laments that he does not have a lover who can provide him

9. For a review of the limited evidence we have about the role of slaves in classical Greek homosexuality, see Golden (1984).
gifts and attention. In *The Persian* (7.8), a favorite slave hopes to obtain freedom as a result of his relationship with his master. Haterius' much-derided statement (9.3) that sexual submission was a "necessity" for a slave and a "duty" for a freedman implies that many freedmen attained their status precisely through submitting to their master's attentions. The rich freedman Trimalchio in Petronius' *Satyricon* boasts of having been his master's pet for fourteen years (9.14.75–76), to the extent that he could manipulate his master into not only freeing him, but even making him the principal heir of a vast estate. This evidence, even when drawn from fictional sources, suggests that the Romans themselves did not see slave-oriented pederasty in terms of power dynamics so much as an opportunity for slaves to improve their status.

**Origin and Chronological Development**

Most previous discussions of Greek and Roman homosexuality, although distinguishing between the two cultures, tend to treat each culture synchronically, as if attitudes and practices were relatively uniform over time. However, reflection on the various social practices of homosexuality and swings in public attitudes toward it in Western societies just in the second half of the twentieth century should caution us against such static assumptions in the case of ancient societies, which bore witness to many equally wrenching social and political transformations. One advantage of gathering texts together in the format this volume provides is that it allows detailed consideration of significant chronological developments within both Greece and Rome.

The origin of institutionalized homosexual practices in Greece has been a matter of considerable speculation and controversy, with some scholars tracing it back to Indo-European or Minoan origins. Ancient texts variously credit the Spartans (2.10–13) or Cretans (2.15–16, 5.10–11) with a special role as early practitioners, particularly in what may be initiatory contexts. Some lyric texts (1.4–27, 1.87) and the Thera graffiti (2.22) may support an initiatory interpretation. The earliest artistic evidence (figs. 1–2) is Cretan and suggests a partnership of younger and older warriors. Aristotle (2.15) connects the introduction of the practice with overpopulation and the desire for a lower birthrate, possibly through delayed marriage. Our earliest textual evidence is from the early seventh century (1.1–3, 2.22), although Plutarch (2.1) relates an incident that, if historical, must have occurred around 735–730 B.C.E. There is no clear evidence for homosexual-

10. A notable exception in this regard is E. Cantarella (1992).
11. See the bibliographical note to chapter 2.
12. See the bibliographical notes to chapters 1 and 2.
ity in the epic poetry of Homer and Hesiod,\textsuperscript{13} which could support a thesis of seventh-century origins, possibly in response to population issues.

The evidence is far more substantial for the fifth century and later, when one can note a progressive diminution in the status of pederasty at Athens, apparently in conjunction with the growth and radicalization of the democracy. In the earliest decades of the fifth century stands the legend of the tyrannicides Aristogeiton and Harmodius (1.89, 2.2, fig. 18), who are credited (falsely) with a decisive role in overthrowing the Peisistratid dynasty and inaugurating democratic self-governance. Their legend should be seen as an attempt to situate the practice of upper-class pederasty within the emergent democratic ideology. Art historians have noted that scenes of uninhibited pederastic courtship and sex are common on Athenian vases until about 460 (see figs. 4–17, 19–22), parallel to the celebration of pederastic love in the lyric poets; afterward, however, such representations (and, indeed, even explicit heterosexual scenes) virtually disappear in favor of much more coded arrangements, as in figs. 23–24.\textsuperscript{14} This movement away from a libertine and hedonistic artistic style toward more prudish and "family-oriented" modalities seems to parallel the sexual conservatism and enforcement of moral norms evident in comedy and oratory of the late fifth and early fourth centuries, which, as we have seen, appeal emphatically to popular tastes and democratic values. Indeed, Thucydides’ demythologizing critique of the Aristogeiton and Harmodius legend (2.2) should be interpreted in the same light. The ethics of self-restraint in regard to boys that is praised by Xenophon (2.9–10, 5.1–3, 5.8) also attests a growing moral problematization of pederasty in this period. It may not be incorrect to read the evolution of "Platonic love" in fourth-century texts as an attempt to rehabilitate pederasty by imagining a more modest and ethically acceptable form of the institution within a social environment that increasingly marginalized traditional pederasty as both nondemocratic (i.e., upper-class) and corrupting (i.e., teaching venality).\textsuperscript{15}

In Rome attitudes toward homosexuality experienced equally significant chronological developments. Our earliest literary evidence, the comedies of Plautus (7.7–15), from around 200 B.C.E., take a fairly benign view of pederastic liaisons as long as they involve slaves. However, the comedies of Pomponius and Novius (7.28–33) and the satires of Lucilius (7.23–27), from about a century later, take on a sharper tone, emphasizing male pros-

\textsuperscript{13} The date of the Homeric epics is disputed, but is most commonly thought to be c. 700 B.C.E. Clarke (1978a) has suggested that the Achilles-Patroclus relationship in the Iliad may be erotic, as it certainly was for Aeschylus (2.21.602; 5.7.180). Against this view, see Barrett (1981) and Patzer (1982) 94–98. See also the discussion of Halperin (1990) 75–87.

\textsuperscript{14} See Shapiro (1981).

\textsuperscript{15} See Hubbard (2000) for a fuller exposition of this historical development.
titution, effeminacy, and free men who abandon their proper roles. During the second century B.C.E., a number of moralistic texts and utterances reject male love altogether, even involving slaves (7.17, 7.19), or worry about the effeminization of Roman manliness (7.18, 7.20) under the growing influence of Greek cultural mores. This contrast between Greek and Roman, together with the perception, which may or may not have been historically accurate, that pederasty was imported into Rome from Greece, also becomes a leitmotif in late republican discourse (7.48, 7.52–55, 7.63). Cicero feels free to use any association with homosexuality against his rhetorical opponents (7.57–64). It should not surprise us that sexuality became problematized at a time when Rome’s national identity and political system were undergoing such profound transformations: indeed, the poet Catullus uses metaphors of sexual domination to express the loss of political liberty with the demise of the Republic (7.43–44, 7.46).

By the Augustan period, however, Rome’s political destiny appeared settled and Greek cultural influence was taken for granted. Even if pederasty in the Greek style was still not fully assimilated, it appears to have been considered less of a threat. In moral and satirical texts of the first century C.E. and later, same-gender relations are often the focus of critical comment, but Greek influence is no longer the issue so much as the morally debilitating effects of wealth, power, and appetitive excess, all tendencies observable at the acme of the Roman Empire and embodied in the personae of the emperors. More detailed discussion of these developments in both Greek and Roman moral attitudes is better left to the introductions to the individual chapters.

Lesbianism

The vast majority of documents from antiquity were written by men, and to the extent that we have evidence about female sexuality, it is usually filtered through male biases. Our knowledge of female homoerotic practices is therefore less satisfactory than we might wish, since these by definition occurred in contexts from which males were excluded. Some of our earliest evidence comes from the late-seventh-century poetry of Sappho (1.5–27), which does express a genuinely female point of view. The social context of her involvement with what appear to be younger girls is disputed, however, with various scholars reconstructing initiatory, educational, or symposiastic milieu; Alcman’s First Maidens’ Song (1.4) may provide a contemporary parallel for female homoerotic pairing as an initiatory ritual, but this text is also hotly disputed. Anacreon (1.31) and possibly Archilochus (1.3) show knowledge of “lesbians” as a special class of women. Plutarch (2.13) tells us that female pederasty was practiced in Sparta alongside male ped-