Priapus, Fresco found in Pompeii, Campania, Italy, 89 B.C.-79 A.D (Source: Wikipedia.org)
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**FUTURE ISSUES**
Editor’s note

Sexuality and Beyond

The third issue of the Journal of Humanistic Psychiatry is centered on sexuality. In 1905, Sigmund Freud published “Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality.” In his work, Freud discusses sexual aberrations or perversions, infantile sexuality and transformation of puberty. Freud approached sexuality in a way that has not been done before and implies that sexuality has a major role in development and all human behaviors.

Likely due to the influence on psychoanalysis in psychiatry, sexual disorders became a major area of research. Many psychiatrists specialized in the treatment of sexual disorders and paraphilias. Sexual problems and fantasies were commonly brought and discussed with patients during regular therapy sessions.

The importance of sexuality in clinical practice and scientific research declined dramatically over the last two decades. Some reasons for this could be the recent emphasis in boundary violation prevention, the drug centered paradigm around care and the success of cognitive behavioral therapy. Today, in clinical practice sexuality is discussed superficially and at times neglected. For instance we know that antidepressants are highly associated with anorgasmia, erectile dysfunction and decreased libido. However I wonder how often clinicians detect and take measures to minimize these side effects with their patients.

Dr. Robert Segraves, the former chair of psychiatry at MetroHealth Medical Center and chief editor of the Journal of Sex and Marital Therapy believes that the research and treatment of sexual disorders in psychiatry is nowadays being neglected. From the Journal of Humanistic Psychiatry we suggest that action is taken to solve this drama.

In this issue, “Priapus and the Worship of the Phallus” discusses the western tradition of conscious and unconscious phallic cult and symbolism. Dr. Aleman discusses an article recently published in nature about the origins of cheese making in Europe. Cheese is today considered an important aphrodisiac and some scientists believe that this could be in part explained by the fact that cheese is rich in phenylethylamine. “The practice of male castration” describes the parallels of castration in different cultures throughout history. Dr. Shand writes a commentary advocating for parity in psychiatry. This essay relates to one of our articles “Sex, Rock and Psychedelia.”

Thanks to the effort of many people, significant social changes were made in the 60’s. Dr. Tomas writes about the iconography and science of hemaphroditism in classicism. In his article, he describes the theories of Aristotle on hemaphrodites. Dr. Espi discusses the fabule of Phillys and Aristotle that gained popularity in the Middle Ages after the translation of Aristotle’s works from Arab to Latin. In our Cinema and Psychiatry section four movies centered on sexuality are discussed.

Finally, I would like to dedicate a few words to the picture below: “The Origin of The World” by Gustave Courbet (1866). This is one of the most erotic art pieces in art history. Courbet became a leader of Realism and anticipated Impressionism. He influenced other notorious artists such as Monet, Cezanne and Hopper and became one of the most innovative artists in history. Gustave Courbet was a free thinker. Later in life he would say: “I am fifty years old and I have always lived in freedom; let me end my life free; when I am dead let this be said of me: ‘He belonged to no school, to no church, to no institution, to no academy, least of all to any regime except the regime of liberty.” Was Courbet also anticipating Existentialism?

--Fernando Espi, M.D.
For ancient Romans, Priapus was the god of fertility and the guardian of gardens. Priapus has been traditionally represented as a male figure with an enormous erect penis. It is believed that Roman cults to Priapus were common as a means of eroticism and comedy. In the excavations of Pompeii, several representations of the fertility god were found in residential houses. As depicted in the figure, Priapus is a bearded athletic man with his characteristically oversized penis.

In Latin literature, the Priapeia are a collection of 99 poems dedicated to god Priapus. The poems were translated in 1890 into English by Leonard Smithers and Sir Richard Burton. As seen in poem number 25, these poems are characterized by a tone that is both sarcastic and humorous. (1)

In Latin

Porro - nam quis erit modus? - Quirites, aut praecidite semenale membrum, quod tutis mihi noctibus fatigant vicinae sine prurientes vernis passeribus salaciores, aut rumpar, nec habebitis Priapum. ipsi cernitis, effututus ut sim confectusque macerque pallidusque, qui quondam ruber et valens solebam fures caedere quamlibet valentes. defect latus et periculosam cum tussi miser exspuo salivam.

In English

Hither, Quirites! (here what limit is?) Either my member seminal lop ye off Which thro’ the livelong nights for aye fatigue The neighbour-women rutting endlessly, Lewder than sparrows in the lusty spring; Or I shall burst and ye Priapus lose. How I be futtered-out yourselves espy Used-up, bejaded, lean and pallid grown, Who erstwhile ruddy, in my doughtiness wont To kill with poking thieves however doughty. My side has failed me and poor I with cough The perilous spittle ever must outsipew.

In medicine, the term priapism is used to describe an unwanted prolonged erection of the penis that is not related to sexual causes. If untreated, priapism can cause ischemic degeneration of penis tissue resulting in erectile dysfunction. Priapism became important in psychiatry with the release of the antidepressant trazodone into the market. Though rare, this drug can induce penile or clitoral priapism. (2)

Phallic cult has remained in Western society since classicism. Humans seem to have a conscious and unconscious tendency to identify phallic symbolism in nature and architecture. Some of the most prominent examples of phallic architecture are in the city of Chicago. In fact, citizens of Chicago claim that the Crain Communications building was designed with the shape...
of a vagina to balance the overwhelming phallic symbolism in the skyline. Other examples of phallic architecture around the world are the Empire State building, the Washington monument, the tower of Pisa, or the Agbar tower in Barcelona.

A contemporary example of phallic cult currently takes place in Japan. The Shinto Kanamara Matsuri (Festival of the Steel Phallus) is celebrated the first Sunday of April. Attendants and visitors enjoy the opportunity to adore a huge steel penis. During the festivity people pray for marriage or easy delivery, and prostitutes pray for protection against sexually transmitted diseases. Legend says that once upon a time a woman with a possessed and violent dentated vagina used a steel penis to break the teeth of the demon. (3)

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1. www.sacred-texts.com/cla/priap

Essays

The Beginning of Cheese Making

Fernando Aleman, Ph.D., Division of Biological Sciences, University of California San Diego

The emergence of dairying was a major innovation for prehistoric humans, as it provided healthy nutrients without the slaughtering of valuable animals. Cheese production from milk was also a developmental improvement since cheese represent a non-perishable milk product (or at least less-perishable allowing the nutritional properties of milk to be available through the year), it’s easy to transport and therefore it can be accessible for more people, and it’s a more digestible product than milk because a lower lactose content. But cheese production is not an easy task, and little evidence can be taken from iconography or inscriptions from the 3rd millennium BC to decipher the history of cheese making. Milk has to be coagulated either by enzymatic or acid treatment. Then the semi-solid curds (rich in proteins, mainly casein, and milk fat) and the water soluble fraction (rich in lactose) has to be split apart. A Nature paper provides the earliest evidence for cheese making based on the pottery that might have been used as a strainer (pots with small holes).

Salque and colleagues focused on the central European Linear Pottery (Linearbandkeramik) culture. It represents one of the first communities using cultivated plants and domestic animals in interior central Europe. They tested the hypothesis that the previously found sieve vessels may have been used as ‘cheese-strainers.’ Previous suggestions pinpoint these sieve vessels as flame covers, honey strainers, or for beer making. They have analyzed the organic residues preserved in these pottery vessels to provide direct chemical evidence. Fifty fragments of sieves, representing 34 vessels, were sampled from the Kuyavia region (Poland). They extracted lipid residue and analyzed it by gas chromatography and GC–MS, or gas chromatography and GC–C–IRMS. Comparisons of the values obtained from the sieve vessels with modern reference fats showed values expected for dairy fats. To further support their hypothesis the authors also highlight the fact that according to animal bone assemblages from the settlements in Kuyavia, the culture had a high reliance on domestic ruminants, especially cattle.

Overall, the traces of dairy fat in ancient ceramics provide the first evidence for cheese production during the early Neolithic between approximately 5,400 and 4,800 cal. BC.
The Practice of Male Castration

Fernando Espi, M.D., Department of Psychiatry, The University of Chicago

Male castration is an action in which a man ends up losing the function of his testicles. Today, castration can be practiced surgically or chemically. Male castration has been practiced extensively throughout history.

A eunuch is a man who has been castrated early enough to develop hormonal changes. One of the first representations of a eunuch can be seen today at the British Museum in London. The Assyrian relief of Ashurnasirpal depicts a eunuch as a man without beard swimming (figure one).

(Fig.1) Assyrian Relief Ashurnasirpal II, British Museum, London.

Source:http://classconnection.s3.amazonaws.com/140/flashcards/270140/pn g/assyrian_archers_pursuing_enemies1349979501783.png

Perhaps one of the most moving stories about eunuchs is the tale of Sporus. In Ancient Rome Emperor Nero had a young boy named Sporus castrated and married him. According to Suetonius, Sporus accompanied Nero until the moment of his murder. After Nero’s death, Vitellius planned for Sporus to play the leading role in the play “The rape of Persephone” during gladiator combats. Sporus committed suicide in order to avoid such humiliation.

Some references to eunuchs can also be found in the Bible. The book of Genesis 39 relates the story of Joseph and Potiphar. Joseph was sold into slavery by his brothers to Potiphar. Potiphar’s wife was not sexually satisfied by her husband and tried to have sex with Joseph. After Joseph rejected her, she accused him of rape. Consequently Potiphar incarcerated Joseph. It has been claimed that Potiphar could not satisfy his wife sexual needs due to his state as a eunuch.

In the New Testament (Mathew 19:12), Jesus preaches against divorce by emphasizing the importance of not abandoning one’s wife unless she has committed adultery. The disciples reply that in those circumstances it may be better not to get married. After hearing that, Jesus replies: “For there are some eunuchs, who were so born from their mothers’ womb: and there are some eunuchs, who were made eunuchs by men: and there are eunuchs, who have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven’s sake. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it.”

Castrated eunuchs were also the guardians and administrators of Harems in the Ottoman Empire. The association between castration and eroticism may have remained in our collective unconscious. As depicted in the album of romantic Hawaiian songs (figure 2), the beautiful Hawaiian lady holds two maracas that clearly suggest a castrative icon.
"Castration anxiety" is a psychoanalytic concept developed by Sigmund Freud. According to Freud, during the phallic phase of development (3-5 years old), little children compete with their fathers for the love of their mothers. While boys may experience castration anxiety fearing that their fathers will castrate them to win the competition, girls may experience penis envy feeling that they have already been castrated by their fathers. A bad resolution of castration anxiety and penis envy may result in development of neurotic symptoms in later life.

Today in the United States surgical castration of pets, also known as neutering is not only considered ethical, but also encouraged by the animal protection agencies as a way to control non desired pet fertility and decrease the number of abandoned pets. The Italian fresco in Castello del Buonconsiglio in Trento by Romanino depicts the castration of a cat in early XVI century (Figure 3).

Human male castration is nowadays generally considered unethical. However, some sectors of society have proposed the practice of chemical castration for repetitive sexual offenders. This topic has led to intense debates with no clear conclusions whether such a practice could decrease the rates of sexual offenses.
It’s My Parity and I’ll Cry if I Want To

John P. Shand, M.D., Department of Psychiatry, Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, OH.

This past October 2012 marked the 10th anniversary of the death of US Senator Paul Wellstone, a former Minnesota legislator and a tireless advocate for mental health parity.

Many others in the Senate and Congress stood alongside Wellstone in the fight for parity, including Rhode Island Representative Patrick Kennedy who brazenly announced that he suffers from bipolar disorder and substance abuse addictions being previously addicted to cocaine. These legislators firmly believed that true psychiatric patient care would never be fully realized until mental health was taken as seriously as physical health, not only among all members of the health community, but also among members of the government and general public.

This is why Wellstone and Kennedy supported the Mental Health Parity Act in 1996. This is why, following Senator Wellstone’s death, the Senator’s brother David worked diligently with members of Congress to pass the Paul Wellstone and Pete Domenici Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act of 2008. And this is why, when it comes to advocating for the field of psychiatry, there is no greater issue than mental health parity. Despite the hard work and dedication of so many, full parity for mental health has yet to be achieved.

The legislative story began in 1996 when The Mental Health Parity Act (MHPA) was signed into law. The legislation, which took effect in January 1998, required that the dollar limits on lifetime benefits for mental health be no lower than the medical or surgical benefits that are offered by a group health plan or health insurance issuer. (1)

In 2008, an updated version - The Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act - was signed into law and became effective January 1, 2010. This new version of the bill addressed many of the egregious omissions of the former legislation, most notably, including additional mental health and substance use disorder benefits. While it clearly made great strides in achieving true equality, this bill was still lacking in some key areas, such as the continued neglect of service provided to employees of small businesses.

The January 2012 issue of The American Journal of Psychiatry touched on the issue of mental health parity by publishing “the first study to provide evidence of the effects of parity in the context of non-quantitative treatment limitations, albeit in a single state [Oregon].” (2) The results showed that the parity law was most likely not responsible for any increase in spending on mental health. This finding is in direct contrast to the concerns of employer groups and insurance companies opposing the bill, who offered up Doomsday predictions of mental health provisions crippling insurance budgets and increasing out-of-pocket costs for patients.

As I finish my first year of Psychiatry residency, I am reminded that advocacy for mental health parity, while important for our profession, is imperative for our patients. It is our duty to educate and to fight back, not only against the great lobbying forces opposed to the legislation, but equally against the generalized disparity that surrounds mental health diagnoses.

References:
Hemaphroditism and Medicine in Antiquity: Evidence and Images

Jorge Tomas Garcia, Ph.D., Department of Art History, University of Murcia, Spain

“He was born two-natured, a hermaphrodite, which was shown in his appearance; for even when he grew old he had no beard; it was evident too from his voice which sounded thin, shrill, and high-pitched, with the modulations that nature bestows on eunuchs also”

Philostratus, Vitae sophistarum, 489.

The figure of the Hermaphrodite, the human being with both male and female sex characteristics, has always fascinated the human mind. The first reports on bisexuality are found in the legends on the nativity of Hermaphroditos who was considered to be the son of Hermes and Aphrodite (Ov. Met. IV. 368; Hygin. Fab. 271.)1. Hermaphrodites have somatic characteristics mid-way between the two genders, due to the hormones secreted by the ovariotestis or the ovary on the one hand, and by the testicle on the other (Diod. IV. 6; Lucian, Dial. Deor. 15. 2; Vitruv. II. 8; Fest. s. v. Salmacis.). Greek mythology abounds with examples of such mixed beings. Striking examples are Dyalos, the androgyne, Arsenothelys, the man-woman, Gynnis, the effeminate, Phanes, the creator god to be found in the orphism doctrine, Adgistis, with two sexes, also known as Pseudanor, the fake man2.

1 The aim of this paper is not to establish the content of the mythological figure of Hermaphrodithe, a subject much discussed by philologists. I simply refer to Silberman, L.: “Mythographic Transformations of Ovid’s Hermaphrodithe” The Sixteenth Century Journal 19-4, 1988, 643-652.

Hippocrates of Cos assumed that sex existed along a continuum from the extreme male to the extreme female and hermaphrodites were located between these two states3. Of particular importance to the Hippocratic view of hermaphroditism was the idea of being in between the sexes. Hermaphrodites were therefore intermediate and regarded as neither male nor female. Hippocrates regarded the sex of the foetus as determined by two opposites: the maternal and the paternal principles which generated different seeds4.

Aristotle on the other hand did not consider the hermaphrodite as a being of intermediate sex but as a being with redundant or double genitalia. Aristotle, who denied the existence of female seed, declared that the hermaphroditic foetus was produced when the matter contributed by the mother was more than enough for one but insufficient for two foetuses. Therefore, for Aristotle, hermaphroditism was a condition only of genitals, “like extra toes or nipples, in that it represented an overabundance of generative material”5.


3 Hippocrates, Regimen, 1.28.33-36.


5 Aristotle, Generation of Animals, IV 772b26-35.
Diodorus Siculus, in the thirty-second book of his Bibliotheca Historica, describes two detailed instances of an individual suffering from male pseudohermaphroditism in which the symptoms went untreated until puberty. In all of these cases, male genitalia develop where the individual had mildly ambiguous female genitalia. The account of male pseudohermaphroditism provided by Diodorus Siculus involved an Epidaurian girl named Kallo. Although she was considered female at birth, “the orifice with which women are naturally provided had in her case no opening”. She was married and while living with her husband for two years, she was being “obliged to submit to unnatural embraces” because “she was incapable of intercourse as a woman”. During this time, “a tumour appeared on her genitals” which caused severe pain. In Kallo’s case an apothecary had offered to cure and “cut into the swollen area, whereupon a man’s privates were protruded, namely testicles and an imperforated penis”. Steps were taken by the apothecary to “remedy the remaining deficiencies”; including “cutting into the glans to make a passage into the urethra, and inserting a silver catheter where he drew off the liquid residues”. Finally, by “scarifying the perforated area, he brought the parts together”.

Galen, a Roman physician working in the first and second centuries A.D., also mentions the medical condition of hermaphroditism. Although Galen describes the differences between the male and female sexes, he does not provide a description of the condition of hermaphroditism as he understood it. That being the case, he does mention hermaphroditism in his book On Semen. Galen did not provide a detailed description of hermaphrodites except to say that they had both sets of reproductive parts, those of the male and those of the female. Given the limited number of hermaphrodite individuals that would have existed in Antiquity, it is unlikely that any of the physicians discussed here had ever encountered such an individual.

Most ancient people eliminated children with doubtful gender: for Greeks this was an expression of their need to demonstrate the physical beauty of their race, while among the Romans it was an interpretation of this aberration as being a bad omen. When a child was born with abnormal sexual organs, he was immediately sentenced to death by the community, who interpreted this as a sign of divine wrath. Abnormal children were seen as signs of evil that had to be removed by the state by being cast out beyond the limits of the city. The birth of a hermaphrodite child was considered in Republican times an ill-omened prodigy, and to avert national disaster the baby had to be ritually killed.

Mircea Eliade and Carl Jung see in the figure of the androgyne the projection of a longing for a return to primordial unity, for escape from the unbearable tension of the opposites. But transcendence is only one of the motives involved in androgyny in the ancient world. As Diodorus of Sicily wrote regarding the god Hermaphroditus, “There are some who declare that the coming into being of creatures of a kind such as these are marvels [terata], and being born rarely they announce the future, sometimes for evil and sometimes for good” (4.6.5). Thus, figures of gender transgression become polyvalent symbols. Hermaphroditus, represents an attempt to explore the limits of human sexuality by formulating in three different ways:

6 Diodorus Siculus 32.12.2. This account is considered the main source for the study of hermaphroditism in the Greek context by all contemporary authorities on the subject.
7 Ibid. 32.11.1.
8 Ibid. 32.11.3.
9 Ibid. 32.11.2.
11 The vision of those who met hermaphroditic beings in the Antiquity is collected by Androutsos, G. “Hermaphroditism in Greek and Roman antiquity” Hormones 5:3, 2006, 214-217.
the male, the mixed and the female. The concept of “a sexuality” was unknown to ancient Greeks, they understand “sexuality” as a system of discourse. If we define “sexuality” as a creation of nineteenth-century medical discourse, we can all agree that the Greeks did not have this concept.

Pan and Hermaphrodite, Pompeii. House of Castor & Pollux

In fact, the concept of dual sexuality was expressed in Greek art by the end of the fourth century B.C.E. in stones representations of beings whose double sex was expressed through the lateral bifurcation of female breasts and male genitals. In Greek vase painting Hermaphroditos was depicted as a winged youth with male and female attributes: usually female thighs, breasts, and style of hair, and male genitalia. Ancient Greeks did not associate sexual relations with binary labels, as modern Western society does.


Finally, the popularity of the hermaphrodite as the subject of paintings and sculptural artworks, particularly during the Roman Empire, is a testament to the prominence of this figure within ancient society. These hybrid genre figures are of two forms and are known from later Roman copies or interpretations. Because gender is a cultural construct, it follows that it would be present in other cultural forms, such as art. This medical philosophy of the physical likeness of male and female bodies can been traced in the sculptures of the Archaic, Classical and Hellenistic periods, which are characterized by an absence of specific male of female characteristics. Representations of the hermaphrodite in Hellenistic art can be broken down into two distinct groups. The first, the anasyromenos type, of which there are at least six known examples dating to the Hellenistic period, depicts an otherwise female figure lifting its clothing to reveal male genitals. The second type, so-called Hellenistic genre sculptures, have a torsional construction that makes initial identification of the figure as hermaphrodite impossible.


15 The ancient texts seem to point a condition known as male pseudohermaphroditism in which the individual is born with external genitalia resembling that of a female.
16 The principal scientific contribution to this subject in the last decade is by Brisson, L. Sexual Ambivalence: Androgyny and Hermaphroditism in Graeco-Roman Antiquity, Berkeley, 2002.
19 I agree in these cases the distinction made by Çakmak, L. Mixed Signals: Androgyny, Identity, and Iconography on the Graeco-Phoenician Sealings from Tel Kedesh, Israel, Michigan, 2009, 45.
Aristotle and Phyllis: A Story Against The Dangers of Love

Carlos Espi Forcen, Ph.D., Department of Art History, University of Murcia, Spain

It is generally admitted that the development of science in the Late Middle Ages was highly indebted to the rediscovery of Aristotle via Arabic translations. During the High Middle Ages copyists in monasteries preferred to reproduce other kind of works, such as the Bible, commentaries on parts of the Bible or books about specific Christian dogmas or symbols. It seems that Aristotle was not interesting enough for Christian theology during this period, his works were neglected and definitely lost in the Western world until they were translated from Arabic, since in the Islamic world he had an important role in the philosophy of Avicenna and Averroes. The appraisal of Aristotelian works contributed to the emergence of European Universities and forged the way of thinking of the influential theologians such as Albert the Great and his disciple Thomas Aquinas. Thus, in the Late Middle Ages Aristotle represented par excellence the prototype of wisdom and knowledge. The high consideration of the figure of Aristotle contrasts drastically with the late medieval story of Aristotle being mocked by a young lady.

The legend starts with Alexander during his conquest of Asia in the moment he had already reached the remote and unexplored territories of India. There he met a beautiful woman, Phyllis, and he fell in love with her to the extent that he dismissed his obligations as a ruler. His courtesans were deeply worried and they called his master Aristotle to make him focus on the government affairs and forget the delights and beauty of the young Indian damsel.

Alexander followed his tutor’s advice and put some distance between him and Phyllis. Obviously young lady was not happy with the situation and she planned to take revenge on the old master. Phyllis seduced him with great success by even exposing the flesh of her leg and the old man fell deeply in love with her. He desired her with such passion that he was ready to do anything that she demanded. Phyllis told the old master that she would be his lover only if he let her to ride on his back around the courtyard of the palace. The Greek philosopher satisfied her request and he turned into the lady’s horse offering a terrible spectacle that was contemplated by Alexander, since Phyllis previously reported his intentions. Alexander required an explanation and Aristotle in return warned that if a woman could make a fool of an old and experienced man like him, she could be much more harmful with a young man like him.

It has been suggested that this story arrived to Europe from Islamic sources, since some Arabic written legends parallel our story with different characters. The West would have inherited the topos of the legend and added the characters of Alexander, Aristotle and Phyllis. The first written sources we have of this legend are a French novel around 1230, Le Lai d’Aristote, and shortly after a German version, Aristoteles und Phyllis, that has been preserved in a manuscript from the second quarter of the 13th century. Slightly different versions of the story were written until the 15th century, sometimes the lovers were young and their parents disapproved their love, whereas other times they were adults. In a less demeaning version, Phyllis rode Aristotle’s back because she was tired and had sore feet.

The story could nowadays be viewed as an example of misogyny, since its purpose is to admonish men against the perils of being surrounded by women. Their dangerous power could even make the wisest man of the time fall in disgrace. Aristotle is aware of the fact that he is going to be humiliated, but he is subdued by his desires of flesh. In the German Aristoteles und Phyllis the Greek philosopher

1 A few examples are Civitate Dei by Saint Augustine; Moralia in Iob by Gregory the Great; the comment on the Apocalypse by Beatus of Liebana; De perpetua virginitate Mariae contra tres infideles by Saint Hildesfonsus (a treatise on the virginity of Mary); or De laudibus sanctae crucis by Hrabanus Maurus (a treatise on the symbol of the cross). Even if some classical works were copied, like Pliny’s Natural History, Aristotelian works were completely neglected.


4 Ibid., pp. 9-10.

manifests his fear to be seen being ridden: “If the others see it, I will be disgraced forever from that moment on”, nonetheless his passion for Phyllis make him take the risk. Phyllis’ revenge could not be fulfilled without an audience, and of course the spectacle was particularly harmful if beheld by the pupil Alexander.6

The story of Aristotle and Phyllis must have been popular even before the French and German literary works were written. The appearance of images and literary works of the legend was in fact simultaneous. A wool embroidery dated also in the first quarter of the 14th century depicts the legend in two different scenes: first, Aristotle is gently touching the face of his beloved Phyllis through a window from an interior setting; secondly, we see the moment in which Phyllis is riding the scholar like an animal, she is pulling the brides and flagellating him to run faster (fig. 1).7 It seems to have turned into a popular iconographic motif in this century and it often appears in the so-called minor arts, either in ivory caskets, private utensilia, misericordia or illuminated manuscripts. One example is a late 14th century Netherlandish aquamanile that represents Phyllis riding the Greek scholar (fig. 2). Aquamaniles contained water and were used for people to wash their hands before having dinner. Its purpose would be no other than entertain people at the table with a popular story.8 In Early Modern German art this legend was frequently represented both in engravings and paintings. A good example is the engraving executed in 1513 by Hans Baldung Grien (fig. 3). Both Aristotle and Phyllis are already naked and the woman is riding on the philosopher while Alexander is watching the scene from the roof of the palace.9

Aristotle and Phyllis legend enjoyed popularity in the Late Middle Ages in Central Europe. It had the intention to prevent men against the threatening power of women to manipulate men’s will with seduction of the flesh.

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7 Camille, op. cit., p. 125.
Sex, Rock and Psychedelia: Psychiatry and The Counterculture of the 1960’s

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The drastic changes during the 1960’s have been often pointed out as a social revolution. Politically this decade has been marked by the civil rights movement and the opposition to U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War.

During the 1960’s the approach to sexuality shifted completely. Likely influenced by the beatniks, the hippies (derivation from hipster, a term used to describe those who imitate the style of Jazz musicians in the 1940’s) established in Haight-Ashbury, San Francisco. They preached peace and free love. (1-2)

In 1963, Betty Friedan published “The Feminist Mystique.” (3) In her book she conducted a survey to middle class housewives who were living in the suburbs and concluded that they were not satisfied with their lives. After that she founded the National Organization for Women (NOW) with the idea of bringing women into mainstream society in equal partnership with men. The feminist movement also advocated for the legislation of abortion.

The homophile movement had started in the 1950’s (Analyst Karl Gunther Heimsoth had defined the term homophile in 1924) and during the 60’s it gained strength in San Francisco and changed its name to the Gay liberation movement. (2)

The social revolution of the 1960’s would not have been the same without the release of one drug: Lysergic Acid Diethylamide, also known as LSD. The drug was invented in Switzerland by Albert Hoffman who worked at the Sandoz Laboratories. He thought that this compound could have clinical applications. LSD relieves anxiety and induces trance states, spiritual feelings, synesthesias, and altered thought processes.

During 1950’s the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) financed a top-secret project called MKULTRA to study the potential mind controlling properties of LSD. One of the participants in that study was Ken Kesey. During the study he met other participants from psychiatric institutions that inspired him to write “Someone flew over Cuckoo’s Nest.” His novel was very successful and was turned into an Oscar winning film in the 1970’s. (4)

Several researchers became interested in the potential properties of LSD to treat psychiatric disorders, which gave birth to psychedelic therapy. For instance, Bill Wilson, the cofounder of Alcoholic Anonymous (AA) did several trials with patients who had alcoholism and concluded that not only this drug was helpful for alcohol cessation but could also help patients enhance a connection with a higher power. (5) Consequent studies explored the therapeutic properties of LSD in alcoholism with encouraging results. (6) LSD was also found to have anti-anxiety properties in patients with cancer and other terminal illness. (7) Some scholars also proposed that LSD could have clinical use in psychotherapy. According to traditional psychoanalytic thinking, psychosis was regarded as a manifestation of the unconscious mind. Some therapists believed that the unconscious could be reached by using LSD. Some studies encouraged clinicians to use LSD with their therapy patients. (8) Later, a distinction between psychedelic therapy (using higher doses) and psycholytic therapy (using lower doses) was established. (9) LSD was also considered a potential enhancer of trance states in hypnosis. (10)

During the 60’s, Sanz Laboratories had lost the patent of LSD and Owsley Stanley started to manufacture the drug in San Francisco for recreational purposes. Ken Kesey started to organize “Electric Kool Acid Test” parties. These consisted of a group of people gathering together to ingest LSD and have a “trip” together. (11)

LSD also impacted the artistic scene of the 60’s counterculture. The experiences under the influence of LSD enriched the lyrics of rock songs. Critics started to talk about
psychedelic music. In 1967 The Beatles released “Lucy in the Sky with diamonds,” (LSD) in their album titled, “St. Pepper Lonely Hearts Club Band.” Similarly Jimmie Hendrix, Jefferson Airplane, Cream, and The Grateful Dead had a pivotal role in the consolidation of psychedelic music in the United States. (12) The posters used to announce psychedelic concerts became true art pieces. Several of these artists also lived in San Francisco, including Rick Griffin (leading designer of album covers of the Grateful Dead), Wes Wilson, and Victor Moscoso. The latest had emigrated from Spain to study Arts at Yale University and became the first psychedelic artist with an academic background. Pink Floyd worked with the group Hypgnosis for their album covers. Psychedelic art was influenced by the oniric representations of surrealism (rooted in the psychoanalytic theories). Additionally, psychedelic art emphasized the use of brilliant and symmetric colorful images in an attempt to depict the effects of LSD. (13)


Source: denverabout.com

Psychedelia was also reflected in cinema after the artistic contributions of three friends: Jack Nicholson, Dennis Hopper, and Peter Fonda. In 1967 the film “The Trip” was released. This film written by Nicholson tells the story of a man (Peter Fonda) that uses psychedelic therapy in an attempt to solve conflicts in his troubled marriage. The depictions of trance states resemble the dreams by Salvador Dali in Hitchcock’s Spellbound. “Psych Out” was released the following year (written and starred by Jack Nicholson) where the values of the hippies are well represented. In this film a group of friends live in Haight-Ashbury, drive a Volkswagen van, practice free love, play in a psychedelic band, and consume acid on almost a daily basis. In 1969 Dennis Hopper directed and co-starred with Fonda and Nicholson the film “Easy Rider,” which is a cult classic that also represents the values of the 60’s social changes. In the movie, after closing a drug deal Fonda and Hopper ride their bikes to Florida in the search of an early retirement. They encounter Nicholson in a small town in Texas who joins them in the trip hoping that they stop in a famous


Source: collectorsweekly.com
whorehouse of New Orleans. The film pays homage to freedom.


Source: 2bp.blogspot.com

Due to its massive use and potential behavioral disturbances LSD was outlawed in 1968. In the previous year an article published in Archives of General Psychiatry discouraged clinicians from using LSD due to potential aggravation of psychotic symptoms and worsening of mental state. (14) Research in LSD and its recreational use in the general population gradually declined. However it is reasonable to believe that sooner or later the potential therapeutic effects of psychoactive drugs will be re-explored in the field of psychiatry. For instance, a recent article explores LSD’s potential anxiolytic properties in terminally ill patients with cancer. (15) Psychiatrists, as in many other times in history, played a major role in the sociocultural revolution of the 1960’s.

References:


Cinema and Psychiatry

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Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Sex (But Were Afraid to Ask) (1972) by Woody Allen

Woody Allen’s fourth film is inspired by the book with the same title by David Reuben. Woody Allen’s influence from psychoanalysis has been evident throughout his career. The film is set up in seven different short stories. All of them relate to sexual fantasies.

In the first vignette, a court jester tries to make the Queen fall in love with him by using a love potion. His plan to have intercourse with her fails because the Queen is wearing a chastity belt. The fantasy of having sex with a superior such as a teacher, a supervisor or a person of a higher rank is common. The authenticity of chastity belts have been put into question. It was thought that knights going to the crusades placed chastity belts on their wives to prevent them from extramarital intercourse. However, if that was the case, chastity belts would have caused urinary tract infections and sores. Several scholars claim that chastity belts are artifacts from the 19th century. As a result, several medieval museums have removed chastity belts from their exhibits.

In the second story, Dr. Ross sees an Armenian patient who claims to be married to a sheep; this is an example of zoophilic fantasy. After seeing the patient, Dr. Ross starts to develop a crush on the sheep as well. The patient could also have been delusional, in that case, this story would be an example of folie a deux (a delusion shared between two people).

The third vignette narrates the story of a woman who can only reach an orgasm through public sex. While outdoor sex can be a normal fantasy, the fact that she can only have sex in public to reach an orgasm makes her meet criteria for a sexual disorder. According to the DSM-IV, symptoms may last more than six months and cause distress and interpersonal difficulty.

In the fourth fantasy is about a man who enjoys wearing his wife's clothes, an example of transvestic fetishism.

The fifth vignette is about a man whose fantasy is exhibitionism. This paraphilia consists of an impulse to expose his genitals to other people.

In the sixth vignette, Victor and Helen visit Dr. Bernardo. Bernardo left his former lab to create his own with his assistant, Igor. After some unusual trials they both realize that Dr. Bernardo has gone insane. Likely as a result of the bizarre experiments, a giant breast escapes and terrorizes the people in the countryside. Victor has to run in order to escape from the lethal, giant boob. This is possibly the most complex fantasy of all the stories. It is an example of regression to an oral stage of development. In this stage, the baby's major drive is food and oral pleasure. The breastfed baby is still unable to differentiate between the self and other objects. He may believe that the breast is part of him or that he is the breast. In the film, the breast becomes a living object.

In the seventh story Woody Allen is a neurotic spermatozoid who waits to be ejected via ejaculation. The spermatozoid is ambivalent and conflicted about his mission. He is scared of what may happen after ejaculation and terrified by all the stories he has heard. His constant conflict depicts somebody at a neurotic level of functioning. This story can also be seen as a metaphor of life and death. Anxiety of the unknown is a constant in Woody Allen's films.

In general, it is considered normal and even healthy to have sexual fantasies. Sexual fantasies may become subjects of analytical interpretation. Sexual fantasies can be a problem if they cause distance between a couple. In other scenarios, sexual fantasies may be a manifestation of an inability to reach intimacy with a partner.
The Piano Teacher (2001) by Michael Haneke

The film by Haneke is based on the novel by Elfriede Jelinek with the same name. It tells the story of Erika Kohut, a piano teacher at a music conservatory. She lives with her strict and controlling mother. Her father was a patient with severe mental illness living in a psychiatric asylum. Like her mother, Erika is also a strict teacher with a harsh superego. Her long-standing sexual repression opens the gate for several paraphilic behaviors, such as smelling used toilet paper in sex cabins, urinating while watching others having sex in a voyeuristic manner, mutilating her vagina and so on.

Erika had an absent father and a strict mother. Her case seems to be the result of introjection of a bad object. According to psychoanalytic theory, an individual with paraphilias may have distortions of the courtship phases. The courtship phases are divided into four phases: 1. Location of the potential partner; 2. Pretactile interaction (talking and flirting); 3. Tactile interaction (hugging, touching, holding); 4. Sexual intercourse. Like in the case of Erika, she lacks the ability to establish intimacy with anybody. She usually constricts her affect pretending that she has no feelings.

At some point in the film, she meets Walter Klemmer, a young student who becomes infatuated with her at first sight. Soon, she will also develop a crush on him, but due to her limitations, she won’t be able to engage. In one scene, Walter pursues Erika in the restroom. She responds to his passion but is unable to engage in normal intercourse. Instead, she tries to control and humiliate Walter. This is an analogy of the relationship that she has with her mother. Her mother also humiliates and controls Erika, thus making the story congruent with the introjection of a bad object theory.

Erika writes a detailed letter to Walter with details about her masochistic fantasies. After reading the letter, he rejects her and tells her that she is mentally sick and needs treatment.

Later on, Walter decides to go to Erika’s apartment and try to make her fantasies real. He is probably still in love with her and does not know what to do to please her. He goes to her house and hits her violently before penetrating her. After he leaves, Erika seems confused, as if the reality of her fantasies were not the way she had expected them to be.

In the final scene she injures herself in the shoulder with a butter knife. This might be the prelude of future self-injurious behaviors.

A Single Man (2009) by Tom Ford

Tom Ford’s masterpiece is a story of lust, love and loss. It is based on the novel by Christopher Isherwood with the same name. Most of the film occurs on a single day of October 1962, the "last day" of George Falconer’s life. He is a middle aged British man on the verge of working as a professor of literature in Los Angeles.
George is bereaving the death of his long term same sex partner Jim, who died in a car accident 8 months earlier when he was visiting his family. Jim's family had no intention to tell George about the death and did not allow him to attend the funeral. George has decided to commit suicide due to the pain and depression he has endured since Jim's death. Through George's eyes, the camera guides us through the beauty of the small things in quotidian life. George's last look at the world makes the spectator aware of this.

The relationship between George and Jim is presented as a matter of fact. Anyone, no matter his or her sexual orientation can identify with the relationship.

In the morning of his last day, George lectures a master class on fear. He starts by saying that we all are different and we all are minorities. The problem is when these little differences represent a threat to other people. George leaves the class feeling that he may have preached in the desert, but one of his students, Kenny, seems to have a curiosity for his teacher that goes beyond the academic.

George's best friend is Charley, another middle aged British drama queen, who used to live off of her enchanting beauty. She was abandoned by her husband and now, aging alone, is confused about her identity in her transition to old age. Charley and George had a different kind of relationship years before he met Jim, but it did not work out since George had a different gender partner preference.

After the class, George goes to the Liquor store to buy gin before going to Charley's house. At the liquor store, he meets Carlos, a handsome Spaniard that makes a pass on George. George seems disinterested but agrees to smoke a cigarette with him. George reveals that he is suffering from a long lost love. For Carlos, lovers are like buses "if one leaves, wait a little while and another one will come." George admires the free spirit of the Spaniard, but for him, life is still meaningless.

When he gets home, he begins to organize his things before shooting himself in the bed, but right before pulling the trigger, he receives phone call from Charley, with whom he had an appointment. This surprises him and stops him from killing himself. At Charley's place, they have some fun drinking and dancing. Charley is jealous of the quality of relationship George and Jim had. In addition, she still has romantic feelings for George and laments that they could not have something "real" as opposed to his relationship with Jim. This statement initially makes George furious, but he forgives her because he understands her frustration. The friendships between gay men and women are usually special and more trustworthy than other relationships. According to psychologist Eric Russell, this could be due to the fact that gay men and straight women are not romantic partners or mating competition. This would render them in a unique position to exchange trustworthy information.

After leaving Charley's home, George goes to his house with the intention to accomplish his suicide, but before he can follow through, he randomly encounters his student Kenny. Perhaps not truly random, for Kenny had asked around for George's address at the University and was looking for him. Kenny tells him that he was worried about him. They have a conversation and George's affect begins to improve. George tells Kenny that his true moments of happiness are those where he felt like he was really connecting with other human beings. Kenny and George go to the beach and swim naked. After that, they go to George apartment and drink a beer. George falls asleep and when he wakes up, he finds his gun under the sheet of Kenny who is sleeping on the couch. Perhaps Kenny suspects George will try to commit suicide and is trying to prevent him, or perhaps Kenny is struggling with his own sexual orientation and is contemplating suicide. One way or the other, George grabs and locks the gun in the drawer. In that moment, George experiences a moment of absolute clarity and feels that everything in his life happened the way it was meant to be. For first time in the film, George desires to continue living. He burns the good-bye notes in the fire, opens the door of his house and watches an owl fly by. According to mythology, an owl passing by one's window is a sign of imminent death. The owl has also been related to wisdom, guidance and protection. After seeing...
the owl, George goes to his room and suffers a fatal heart attack. He receives a visit from Jim who kisses him and a pleasant, bright light blinds the scene. This is a beautiful depiction of a near death experience. Seeing dead relatives and a light are two of the most commonly recounted events.

Tom Ford believes his film can help people appreciate the beauty of the small things and gain appreciation for quotidian daily life. For him, life is short and often, the most beautiful things pass by in front of our eyes without our awareness. He states that if he can make only one person realize this, he will have done his job. Dear Tom, you certainly have done a great job with that!

George Falconer smoking his last cigarette
Source: homemaker.files.wordpress.com

Shame (2011) by Steve McQueen

Shame is a great and thoughtful depiction of the struggles of a man with sexual addiction. It is the story of Brandon, a handsome man in his thirties who works as an advertising executive in New York. Brandon is a professionally successful man who emigrated from Ireland with his sister, Sissy. Brandon suffers from sex addiction and as a result, is exposed to shame and humiliation. Brandon is constantly looking for potential sexual partners in the subway, bars or at the workplace. He has memberships to several erotic pornographic websites and has prostitutes come over his house. Due to his online activity at work, a virus spreads into the computer system. He has to explain about the incident to his boss, David.

Sissy is a part time singer and calls Brandon because she plans to spend some time touring in the city. Brandon tries to ignore her phone calls, but Sissy shows up at his apartment one day anyway. Sissy has a rocky relationship with a guy. She seems to have a history of unstable relationships and bad partner choices. One night, Brandon and David go out to Sissy’s concert. Despite Brandon’s best attempts to keep distance from Sissy, he can’t avoid crying when he listens to her sing “New York, New York” as if he was lamenting something from the past. That night, Sissy has sex with Brandon’s boss which frustrates Brandon greatly. He feels Sissy spoils everything, all the time. Sissy also catches Brandon masturbating in the bathroom and discovers his online porn activity which embarrasses him and makes him even more furious.

One day, Brandon meets Marianne at work. They go out for dinner on a nice date. This is the first time Brandon seems to have a healthy interaction with a woman. Brandon opens up and tells Marianne about his origins in Ireland. He does not tell details but it can be inferred that both Brandon and Sissy had a traumatic childhood. Traumatized people, often develop addiction as a maladaptive way to cope with the pain resulting from traumatic experiences.

The next day, Brandon takes Marianne to a hotel to have intercourse, but for first time in the film, he is unable to sustain an erection. This could be explained by the fact
that this is a real relationship. Often, people who have been traumatized are unable to develop intimacy with a partner. When Brandon is facing the challenge, he fails and cannot engage with Marianne. After she leaves the hotel, Brandon calls a prostitute and has sex with her. He comes back home frustrated and displaces his anger onto Sissy. He then leaves the house in the search of sexual partners. He ends up getting beat up after flirting with someone’s girlfriend. Later in the night, after being denied the entrance of a club, he goes to a gay bar and allows a man to give him fellatio. After that, he goes to an apartment to have a threesome with two prostitutes. While he is having sex with the two prostitutes, he looks at himself in the mirror and experiences a terrifying despair.

When Brandon goes back home, he discovers his sister, bleeding out after having cut herself in the bathroom. He calls the ambulance and they manage to rescue her. In the hospital, Brandon discovers Sissy’s old scars from cutting. Self-injurious behaviors are also frequent in people with early childhood trauma as a means to cope with emotional distress. Self-cutting can certainly become addictive.

Brandon starts thinking about taking action to make changes in his life. However, in the final scene, Brandon finds a woman he had tried to seduce at the beginning of the film in the subway. This time she seems ready for sex. The vicious cycle may continue.
Future Issues

- Fall Issue 2013: Trance states: hypnosis, possession, witchcraft and dissociative disorders
- Winter Issue 2014: The history of psychosis

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