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Chapter 1 : Greek Homosexuality - Livius

In classical antiquity, writers such as Herodotus, Plato, Xenophon, Athenaeus and many others explored aspects of homosexuality in ancient theinnatdunvilla.com most widespread and socially significant form of same-sex sexual relations in ancient Greece was between adult men and pubescent or adolescent boys, known as pederasty (marriages in Ancient Greece between men and women were also age structured.

Greg Johnson, for example, says: The Persians, Greeks, and Romans all practiced it, including some of the manliest men in history and legend, like Achilles and Alexander the Great. There is no question that homosexual behavior was not only tolerated by ancient Aryan peoples, it was considered normal, in some cases even ideal. It was ascribed to the gods Zeus and Ganymede and lauded by poets, philosophers, and historians. It is hard to maintain hateful Jewish attitudes toward homosexuality if one really understands and appreciates the greatness of classical pagan civilization – Queer-bashers are in the grip of Jewry without even knowing it. His book, *Homosexuality in Ancient Greece: The Myth is Collapsing* available online here , is a polemical review of the evidence. The sources he examines include but are not limited to the following. Greek mythology; the works of Athenian comic poets, such as Aristophanes; vase illustrations; the laws of Athens and Sparta as seen in: Crucially, Georgiades also considers the translation of two pairs of ancient Greek words. The first, examined principally through the works of Plato and Xenophon, is erastes-eromenos. As the book shows, this second distinction is particularly relevant to the Aeschines-Timarchus lawsuit mentioned above. The successfully prosecuted case against Timarchus indicates that – in Athens at least – even unpaid homosexual conduct was sufficient to expose the practitioner to the risk of losing his civil rights. I will return later to Georgiades account of the primary sources. The purpose I have in mind here, however, is not to review the book exhaustively. Instead I will summarise its most important arguments and then try to illuminate its most interesting, though not entirely explicit, theme: The men of ancient Greece did not live in a Freudian haze; they were concerned with identifying transcendent reality and bringing it about in their community, for the sake of the common good. I will explain further on what I mean by this. First, though, I will say a little about my own motivations in writing this article. The conventional position on Greek homosexuality has two main parts: In fact, I find them at once disturbing and logically implausible. They are disturbing mainly because they are implicitly Freudian. This means that, for example, sexual relationships between older and younger men were thought normal. According to this view, the erastes-eromenos relationship was a sort of institutionalised pederastic cruising – at its core, merely an expression of the base sexual urges of individual men. The truth, however, is that the ancient polis was a collectivist entity which produced, for its size, a greater share of accomplished men than any other type of state in history. There is another disquieting aspect of the theory. But constantly repeated claims that the sexual mores of Greece were qualitatively different from those of the traditional West are designed to deny our perception of fundamental continuity with this heritage. I think there is in it, too, an insinuation that the absence of sexual strictures in Greek society forestalled the development of sexual neuroses in talented individuals and so allowed them to realise their own greatness. In familiar Freudian style, the theory pathologises the traditional Christian West.

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Chapter 2 : Homosexuality in Ancient Greece Section 2

According to the Oxford Dictionary of the Classical World, the symposion was the main reason for the importance of homosexuality in ancient Greece, as it became the focus of expressions of love, sex, and liaisons both physical and spiritual.

Pederasty in ancient Greece A nude youth plays the aulos for a banqueter: Attic red-figure cup by the Euaion Painter, ca. It was a relationship between an older male and an adolescent youth. A boy was considered a "boy" until he was able to grow a full beard. In Athens the older man was called erastes, he was to educate, protect, love, and provide a role model for his eromenos, whose reward for him lay in his beauty, youth, and promise. The roots of Greek pederasty lie in the tribal past of Greece, before the rise of the city-state as a unit of political organization. These tribal communities were organized according to age groups. When it came time for a boy to embrace the age group of the adult and to "become a man," he would leave the tribe in the company of an older man for a period of time that constituted a rite of passage. This older man would educate the youth in the ways of Greek life and the responsibilities of adulthood. The rite of passage undergone by Greek youths in the tribal prehistory of Greece evolved into the commonly known form of Greek pederasty after the rise of the city-state, or polis. Greek boys no longer left the confines of the community, but rather paired up with older men within the confines of the city. These men, like their earlier counterparts, played an educational and instructive role in the lives of their young companions; likewise, just as in earlier times, they shared a sexual relationship with their boys. Penetrative sex, however, was seen as demeaning for the passive partner, and outside the socially accepted norm. This waiting period allowed the boy to ensure that his suitor was not merely interested in him for sexual purposes but felt a genuine emotional affection for him and was interested in assuming the mentor role assigned to him in the pederastic paradigm. The age limit for pederasty in ancient Greece seems to encompass, at the minimum end, boys of twelve years of age. To love a boy below the age of twelve was considered inappropriate, but no evidence exists of any legal penalties attached to this sort of practice. Thus, the age limit for the younger member of a pederastic relationship seems to have extended from 12 to about 17 years of age. The ancient Greeks, in the context of the pederastic city-states, were the first to describe, study, systematize, and establish pederasty as a social and educational institution. It was an important element in civil life, the military, philosophy and the arts. In the military Main article: Homosexuality in the militaries of ancient Greece The Sacred Band of Thebes, a separate military unit reserved only for men and their beloved youths, is usually considered as the prime example of how the ancient Greeks used love between soldiers in a troop to boost their fighting spirit. The Thebans attributed to the Sacred Band the power of Thebes for the generation before its fall to Philip II of Macedon, who was so impressed with their bravery during battle, he erected a monument that still stands today on their gravesite. He also gave a harsh criticism of the Spartan views of the band: For men of the same tribe little value one another when dangers press; but a band cemented by friendship grounded upon love is never to be broken. They typically took the form of pederasty, with more egalitarian relationships being rarer. Meleager, Achilles, Aristomenes, Cimon, and Epaminondas. He answered their request, bringing his lover to watch. Leading the charge against the Eretrians he brought the Chalcidians to victory at the cost of his own life. The Chalcidians erected a tomb for him in the marketplace in gratitude. It is said that one of the most noble things is to give ones own life to save their lover. Although this did not occur during the Lelantine War example it was still a heroic act for Cleomachus and an even perfect time to show his lover his selfless ways. Love between adult men Given the importance in Greek society of cultivating the masculinity of the adult male and the perceived feminizing effect of being the passive partner, relations between adult men of comparable social status were considered highly problematic, and usually associated with social stigma. This stigma, however, was reserved for only the passive partner in the relationship. According to contemporary opinion, Greeks who engaged in passive homosexuality past the age at which they were the passive members of pederastic relationships "made

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a woman" of themselves; there is ample evidence in the theater of Aristophanes that derides these passive homosexuals and gives a glimpse of the type of biting social opprobrium heaped upon them by their society.

Achilles and Patroclus Main article: Achilles and Patroclus Achilles and Patroclus The first recorded appearance of a deep emotional bond between adult men in ancient Greek culture was in the Iliad BC. Homer does not depict the relationship between Achilles and Patroclus as sexual. The ancient Greeks emphasised the supposed age difference between the two by portraying, Patroclus with a beard, in paintings and pottery, while Achilles is bare, although Achilles was an almost godlike figure in Greek society. This led to a disagreement on whom to make the erastes and whom the eromenos, since the Homeric tradition made Patroclus out to be older but Achilles stronger. Other ancients held that Achilles and Patroclus were simply close friends. The legendary love between Alexander the Great and his childhood friend Hephaestion is sometimes regarded as being of the same order.

Sapphic love Sappho , a poet from the island of Lesbos , wrote many love poems addressed to women and girls. The love in these poems is sometimes requited, and sometimes not. Sappho is thought to have written close to 12, lines of poetry on her love for other women. Of these, only about lines have survived. As a result of her fame in antiquity, she and her land have become emblematic of love between women. In addition to being a poet, Sappho was the head of what was known as a thiasos. Thiasoi were communities of women in which Greek women could receive a limited form of education. Critically, however, girls in these communities also experienced homosexual love, sometimes for their mistresses Sappho writes of her love for various students of hers and sometimes for each other. As the polis evolved, however, marriage came to be an integral instrument for the organization of the culture, and women were confined to their houses; the thiasoi were no more. Girls were taught from their infancies that it was their duty and destiny in life to give their love to the men who would one day be their husbands. Female homosexuality had no place within the constraints of this new social organization. Pedagogic erotic relationships are also documented for Sparta , together with athletic nudity for women. Dover and many others. These scholars have shown that same-sex relations were openly practised, largely with official sanction, in many areas of life from the 7th century BC until the Roman era. Although this perspective is the scholarly consensus in North America and Northern Europe, some scholars believe that homosexual relationships, especially pederasty, were common only among the aristocracy, and that such relationships were not widely practised by the common people demos. In , a conference on Alexander the Great was stormed as a paper about his homosexuality was about to be presented.

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Chapter 3 : Homosexuality in Ancient Greece Essay Example | Graduateway

The belief that ancient Greek society maintained an indulgent attitude towards homosexuality – particularly pederasty – is widely held, both without and within WN circles. Greg Johnson, for example, says: Homosexual pederasty, which still remains a taboo in our culture, was widely practiced by.

Homosexuality in ancient Greece Young man and teenager engaging in intercrural sex , fragment of a black-figure Attic cup, BCâ€™ BC, Louvre In classical antiquity , writers such as Herodotus , [1] Plato , [2] Xenophon , [3] Athenaeus [4] and many others explored aspects of homosexuality in ancient Greece. The most widespread and socially significant form of same-sex sexual relations in ancient Greece was between adult men and pubescent or adolescent boys, known as pederasty marriages in Ancient Greece between men and women were also age structured, with men in their thirties commonly taking wives in their early teens. It is unclear how such relations between women were regarded in the general society, but examples do exist as far back as the time of Sappho. Greek society did not distinguish sexual desire or behavior by the gender of the participants, but rather by the role that each participant played in the sex act, that of active penetrator or passive penetrated. Pederasty in ancient Greece A nude youth plays the aulos for a banqueter: Attic red-figure cup by the Euaion Painter, c. It was a relationship between an older male and an adolescent youth. A boy was considered a "boy" until he was able to grow a full beard. In Athens the older man was called erastes , he was to educate, protect, love, and provide a role model for his eromenos , whose reward for him lay in his beauty, youth, and promise. The roots of Greek pederasty lie in the tribal past of Greece, before the rise of the city-state as a unit of political organization. These tribal communities were organized according to age groups. When it came time for a boy to embrace the age group of the adult and to "become a man," he would leave the tribe in the company of an older man for a period of time that constituted a rite of passage. This older man would educate the youth in the ways of Greek life and the responsibilities of adulthood. The rite of passage undergone by Greek youths in the tribal prehistory of Greece evolved into the commonly known form of Greek pederasty after the rise of the city-state, or polis. Greek boys no longer left the confines of the community, but rather paired up with older men within the confines of the city. These men, like their earlier counterparts, played an educational and instructive role in the lives of their young companions; likewise, just as in earlier times, they shared a sexual relationship with their boys. Penetrative sex, however, was seen as demeaning for the passive partner, and outside the socially accepted norm. This waiting period allowed the boy to ensure that his suitor was not merely interested in him for sexual purposes, but felt a genuine emotional affection for him and was interested in assuming the mentor role assigned to him in the pederastic paradigm. The age limit for pederasty in ancient Greece seems to encompass, at the minimum end, boys of twelve years of age. To love a boy below the age of twelve was considered inappropriate, but no evidence exists of any legal penalties attached to this sort of practice. Thus, the age limit for the younger member of a pederastic relationship seems to have extended from 12 to about 17 years of age. The ancient Greeks, in the context of the pederastic city-states, were the first to describe, study, systematize, and establish pederasty as a social and educational institution. It was an important element in civil life, the military, philosophy and the arts. In the military Main article: Homosexuality in the militaries of ancient Greece The Sacred Band of Thebes , a separate military unit reserved only for men and their beloved, is usually considered the prime example of how the ancient Greeks used love between soldiers in a troop to boost their fighting spirit. The Thebans attributed to the Sacred Band the power of Thebes for the generation before its fall to Philip II of Macedon , who was so impressed with their bravery during battle, he erected a monument that still stands today on their gravesite. He also gave a harsh criticism of the Spartan views of the band: For men of the same tribe little value one another when dangers press; but a band cemented by friendship grounded upon love is never to be broken. Meleager , Achilles , Aristomenes , Cimon , and Epaminondas. He answered their request, bringing his lover to watch. Leading the charge against the Eretrians he brought the Chalcidians to victory at the cost of his own life. The

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Chalcidians erected a tomb for him in the marketplace in gratitude. Although this did not occur during the Lelantine War example it was still a heroic act for Cleomachus and even a perfect time to show his lover his selfless ways. Love between adult men Given the importance in Greek society of cultivating the masculinity of the adult male and the perceived feminizing effect of being the passive partner, relations between adult men of comparable social status were considered highly problematic, and usually associated with social stigma. This stigma, however, was reserved for only the passive partner in the relationship. According to contemporary opinion, Greek males who engaged in passive anal sex after reaching the age of manhood - at which point they were expected to take the reverse role in pederastic relationships and become the active and dominant member - thereby were feminized or "made a woman" of themselves. There is ample evidence in the theater of Aristophanes that derides these passive men and gives a glimpse of the type of biting social opprobrium and shame "atimia" heaped upon them by their society. Achilles and Patroclus Achilles and Patroclus The first recorded appearance of a deep emotional bond between adult men in ancient Greek culture was in the Iliad BC. Homer does not depict the relationship between Achilles and Patroclus as sexual. The ancient Greeks emphasised the supposed age difference between the two by portraying Patroclus with a beard in paintings and pottery, while Achilles is clean-shaven, although Achilles was an almost godlike figure in Greek society. This led to a disagreement on whom to make the erastes and whom the eromenos, since the Homeric tradition made Patroclus out to be older but Achilles stronger. Other ancients held that Achilles and Patroclus were simply close friends. The love in these poems is sometimes requited, and sometimes not. Sappho is thought to have written close to 12, lines of poetry on her love for other women. Of these, only about lines have survived. As a result of her fame in antiquity, she and her land have become emblematic of love between women. In addition to being a poet, Sappho was the head of what was known as a thiasos. Thiasoi were communities of women in which Greek women could receive a limited form of education. Critically, however, girls in these communities also experienced same-sex love, sometimes for their mistresses Sappho writes of her love for various students of hers and sometimes for each other. As the polis evolved, however, marriage came to be an integral instrument for the organization of the culture, and women were confined to their houses; the thiasoi were no more. Girls were taught from their infancies that it was their duty and destiny in life to give their love to the men who would one day be their husbands. Female-female love had no place within the constraints of this new social organization. Pedagogic erotic relationships are also documented for Sparta, together with athletic nudity for women. Dover and many others. These scholars have shown that same-sex relations were openly practised, largely with official sanction, in many areas of life from the 7th century BC until the Roman era. Some scholars believe that same-sex relationships, especially pederasty, were common only among the aristocracy, and that such relationships were not widely practised by the common people demos. In , a conference on Alexander the Great was stormed as a paper about his homosexuality was about to be presented.

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Chapter 4 : Homosexuality in the militaries of ancient Greece - Wikipedia

"Ancient Greece" was in fact a constellation of hundreds of rivalrous micro-states, with their own calendars, dialects and cults - and their own local versions of Greek homosexuality.

Philosophical discourses[edit] Some Greek philosophers wrote on the subject of homosexuality in the military. He preaches no avoidance of the contest with appetite, but rather the achievement of a definite victory over the lower elements of love-passion, and the pursuit of beauty on higher and higher levels until, as in a sudden flash, its ultimate and rewarding essence is revealed. The Theban military commander Pammenes , however, is supposed to have advocated military organization based on pairs of lovers: For men of the same tribe little value one another when dangers press; but a band cemented by friendship grounded upon love is never to be broken. One such example took place during the Lelantine War between the Eretrians and the Chalcidians. In a decisive battle the Chalcidians called for the aid of a warrior named Cleomachus. Cleomachus answered their request and brought his lover along with him. He charged against the Eretrians and brought the Chalcidians to victory at the cost of his own life. It was said he was inspired with love during the battle. Afterwards the Chalcidians , erected a tomb for him in their marketplace and reversed their negative view of homosexuality and began to honor it. According to Xenophon , the Spartans abhorred the thought of using the relationships as the basis of unit formation for placing too much significance on sexuality rather than talent. This was due to their founder Lycurgus who attacked lusts on physical beauty regarding it as shameful. Xenophon asserted that in some city-states the lovers would not even have conversations with one another. He said this type of behavior was horrible because it was entirely based on physical attractions: Nonetheless city states that employed the practice in determining military formation enjoyed some success. The Thebans had one such regiment as the core of their entire army. They attributed this group called the Sacred Band of Thebes for making Thebes the most powerful city-state for a generation until its fall to Philip II of Macedon. Philip II of Macedon was so impressed with their bravery during the battle he erected a monument that still stands today on their gravesite. He also gave a harsh criticism of the Spartan views of the band: One of the prominent Greek military figures enjoying such a relationship was Epaminondas , considered the greatest warrior-statesmen of ancient Thebes by many, including the Roman historian Diodorus Siculus. He had two male lovers: Asopichus and Caphisodorus , the latter died with him at Mantinea in battle. They were buried together, something usually reserved for a husband and wife in Greek society. Another pair of warrior-loversâ€™ Harmodius and Aristogeiton â€™ credited with the downfall of tyranny in Athens and the rise of democracy became the emblem of the city.

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Chapter 5 : Homosexuality in ancient Greece

Homosexuality in Ancient Greece Essay. Many stereotyped images around homosexuality in ancient Greece have been handed down until these days and still resist in the collective imagination, hiding a much more complex and profound reality about which there are lots of open questions even now.

Foster had a fictional character in the work Maurice call Greek homosexuality "the vice of the Greeks". Indeed Greeks and Romans often approved homosexual acts between adult men and youths where it was part of an ongoing educational relationship. This practice of pederasty does not seem to have been approved in the ancient orient, but in other respects the classical and oriental outlooks seem similar. Of the approximately 1, Greek tragedies that were produced in Athens, the learning capital of Greece in little over one century, only 33 have survived. In addition, this and other literary evidence of homosexuality in ancient Greece consists almost completely of public forms, and lacks the evidence of private journals and letters. A further issue is that it is difficult to determine if homosexuality was at all common among all classes, rather than mostly remaining among the upper classes of society. Some assert that pro-homosexual authors have been extrapolate prevalent homosexuality out of little evidence. De Young notes that homosexuality seems to have existed more widely among the ancient Greeks more than among any other ancient culture. The main form of this was pederasty, a custom that seems to have been practiced mostly among the upper classes, in which an older man the erastest would make a young free boy the eromenos his sex partner, and become his mentor. This was regulated by the State as an institution. However, this practice was usually a supplement to marriage, [5] and thus is seen as being done by bisexuals. In Amores 10, Lycinus describes the Athenian character Callicratidas as one who was well provided with handsome slave-boys and all of his servants were. They remained with him till the down first appeared on their faces, but, once any growth cast a shadow on their cheeks, they would be sent away to be stewards and overseers of his properties at Athens. However, homosexual "orientation" is also indicated on the part of Callicratidas, at least toward boys, as in Amores 20 he is said to be reluctant to go to the temple of Aphrodite because he was going to see something female, while Charicles describes those who engage in homosexual sex as having "bought a little pleasure at the cost of great disgrace. Sternly reproving homosexuals he also states, With what blind insensibility have you engulfed your souls that you have missed the mark in both directions, avoiding what you ought to pursue, and pursuing what you ought to avoid? The daring of some men has advanced so far in tyrannical violence as even to wreak sacrilege upon nature with the knife. By depriving males of their masculinity they have found wider ranges of pleasure. But those who become wretched and luckless in order to be boys for longer remain male no longer, being a perplexing riddle of dual gender, neither being kept for the functions to which they have been born nor yet having the thing into which they have been changed. Yet he sees the efforts that a child must go through as making him an attractive object of homosexual affection for all men. Homosexuality is regarded as shameful by barbarians and by those who live under despotic governments just as philosophy is regarded as shameful by them, because it is apparently not in the interest of such rulers to have great ideas engendered in their subjects, or powerful friendships or passionate love-all of which homosexuality is particularly apt to produce. However, he also wrote that "The noble lover of beauty engages in love wherever he sees excellence and splendid natural endowment without regard for any difference in physiological detail", [13] and which many use to endorse homosexuality. Aristophanes posits that there were three kinds of beings from the beginning, that of the male, the female - and a third androgynous - type of person. Zeus is said to have cut these humans in half so that they seek their other sexual counterpart, or in the case of composite being, their own sex. Aristophanes then describes the latter as being such as prefer their own gender, in which he includes lesbianism, and all of which the pagan philosopher commends. Young notes that in Symposium, [14] Plato anticipates virtually every element in the modern discussion the homosexual condition. This reality stands in opposition to the premise which many pro-homosexual writers rely upon, in seeking to disallow the universal condemnation of

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homoeroticism in Romans 1. The Speech of Alcibiades ab. Selections from the Phaedrus cc also give indications of how homosexuality was thought of in Greek philosophy. But, after he had passed from boyhood to manhood, during the years when his hitherto immature intellect now had its full powers of reason, he was hated by all. Attitudes toward homosexuality varied in Greece, as general strictures against same-sex eros existed in parts of Ionia, while in Elis and Boiotia e.

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Chapter 6 : How Do Greeks Treat Homosexuality?

Homosexuality: sexual attraction to persons of the same theinnatdunvilla.com ancient Greece, this was a normal practice.

Homosexual Eros in Early Greece This paper was written as a course essay in It does not purport to be anything other than an early graduate student paper. Anthropologically a majority of societies [1] accept what we now call homosexuality, especially where one partner plays a totally feminine role. What is special about Greek homosexuality is its apparent prevalence, the appreciation of aspects of masculinity in the other partner and the almost total damnatio memoriae suffered by the phenomenon until recent decades. Modern academic orthodoxy on same sex relationships in early Greece is now based on the work of K J Dover. Only published in Greek Homosexuality has become standard rapidly displacing attitudes which either ignored the phenomenon or glorified it as an example of early gay liberation. In this paper I intend to look at the sources available and the way in which they can be misleading. I shall then look at various aspects of Greek homosexuality and at how too easy simplifications can distort our appreciation of its geographical and chronological extent, its level of social acceptance and its distribution amongst different classes and age groups. Definitions are important in considering the subject of sexuality. The word itself is a nineteenth century attempt to medicalise what had previously been known as sodomy. Perceptions moved from sinful acts to sick persons. The Greeks were living before either a sin or medical model of homosexuality and while aware of differing inclinations did not consider these important enough to establish a separate social category. Exclusive preference for one sex or the other was not an issue and most men we hear about liked both. The fact that it was largely homosexual is interesting to us but was not particularly so to the Greeks. We have a relative abundance of sources for, as Dover points out, eros was not something to be hidden, at least in its social aspects. What went on when the bedroom door was shut is less clear. The representational art of the period is a primary source. Romantic love is source of inspiration for both artists and purchasers. We can gather what were the accepted canons of beauty from statues such as those of the Kouroi. By far the best visual sources are the hundreds of vase and pottery paintings which survive. They have some contribution to what ideals of beauty were current, but more importantly they show social settings of erotic encounters and daily life in general. As objects themselves they were used in social settings and where we can discover what these were we have further evidence. Literary sources are more diverse. Homer and Hesiod give some idea of pre-archaic mores concerning erotic desire. From the archaic period itself we have a wealth of erotic poetry - Sappho, the lone female witness, Anacreon, Ibycus and Solon all writing lyric poetry and Theognis, whose elegiac corpus was later conveniently divided into political and pederastic sections. The speech of Aischines against Timarchus gives a good example of oratory on homosexual acts from the 4th century. A third group of sources are scraps of information we can draw from the vocabulary used about erotic desire, information we have about laws and privileges in certain cities and modern prosopography that can identify phenomena like the homosexualisation of mythical persons which occurred in our period. These sources demand careful use and the assumptions made laid bare. The failure to do this is what can lead to specious generalisations such as those I take issue with later. The first point to note is the chronological and geographical despatchness of the sources in question. For instance vases come mainly from the period , have a variety of origins and were found all over the Greek world. Literary sources come from a much longer period but pose a particular problem in that, with the exception of Solon, none of the early sources are Athenian whilst almost all the later ones are. The assumption made to use this evidence is that social arrangements in Greece did not in fact change very quickly and that it is acceptable to use information from one area and period about Greek life in general on the grounds that a certain common culture did hold sway over all Greece. This procedure has obvious drawbacks. In this paper I have treated things Plato has to say in the Symposium as relevant to what was taking place a century earlier amongst Athenian aristocrats. Another issue is of how we interpret vase illustrations and

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poems. It is quite clear vase paintings are not meant as photographs; the same features are used repeatedly by individual artists. There was a definite set of conventions related to but not the same as real life. Scenes of intercourse between men were so frequent that they acquired their own set of conventions [4]. We need to be aware of these conventions, their relationship to real life, how they changed over a period of time, and the fact that conservatism set in the 5th century and left pictorial innovation to wall and panel painters whose work has not survived in great quantities. Similarly poets assumed a poetic persona and observed the conventions of the poetic form they used. There is a tendency to either use artistic conventions as if they reflect life exactly or as if they reflect if not life then real social conventions. All three must be related but the mere fact that conventions in art and literature were not the same highlights the dangers - anal penetration for example is widely written of but rarely portrayed in art. Aischines is another good articulate source, used precisely by Dover because his oratory was meant to appeal to the men of the assembly. It is not unknown for an advocate to flatter a jury by assuming higher standards than its members would actually hold so there is a danger here also. For the archaic period Aischines has limited usefulness as he was speaking in which is very late for our period. The sources then pose a whole series of problems especially as there are gaps just where one would want more information, particularly about early Athens. They are also overwhelmingly produced by or for aristocratic men. I would add that there is plenty of evidence about the thoughts of lovers but, apart from Alcibiades? The sources as used by Dover have established a fairly standard view of homosexual eros in archaic and early classical Greece. The simplified view is that there was increased leisure in the 7th and 6th centuries and that this gave men time to build up an erotic culture; that what happened in Athens is a good indication of what happened elsewhere; that the romance always took the form of a man pursuing a boy and that the man alone took pleasure from the sexual activity which was not an important part of the relationship in any case; and that homosexuality was mainly an aristocratic pleasure which died down after democracy established its values. What I propose to do in this essay is to open out the view of Greek love that is establishing itself and to show that its parameters were wider than Murray and others imagine. Homosexual eros was accepted throughout antiquity, in Rome as much as classical Athens. The reason for this acceptance was that previous generations had accepted it also. This is what makes the 7th and 6th centuries so important for it was then for the first time that a culture in which same sex relationships were celebrated grew up. That the archaic period provided the basis for later centuries does not mean that homosexuality was previously unknown, rather that we have no evidence. There have been attempts to say that homosexuality entered Greek culture with the arrival of the Dorians. The wide acceptance of homosexuality in Dorian cities is cited as the grounds for this. Our earliest evidence of a culture of homosexual eros comes however from Ionian Solon and Aeolian Sappho rather than Dorian Tyrtaeus. It is not then a question of homosexuality coming from anywhere. The geographical extent of the phenomenon makes attempts to ascribe homosexuality to more leisure on behalf of the Athenian aristocracy untenable. Sparta was not at leisure nor many other cities with tyrannies where homosexuality was as acceptable as in Athens. Origins of cultural homosexuality are better found in the social life of the 7th and 6th centuries rather than in any historical event. Greece was more settled than in the 8th and early 7th centuries. We have evidence of a growing population - the number of graves in Attica increased six-fold [5]- and bigger cities. The position of women was down graded in cities where only men were citizens. In the cities new social settings grew up for men; in gymnasiums men wrestled and ran naked; the symposium or drinking party became a part of city life, and again it was men only. In this situation homosexuality came to the fore. This seems to have been a period of cultural openness and the Greeks had no revealed books to tell them that homosexuality was wrong. It is an oddity of our culture that men often refuse to acknowledge the beauty of another man. The Greeks had no such inhibitions. They were meeting each other daily in male only settings, women were less and less seen as emotional equals and there was no religious prohibition of the bisexuality every human being is physically equipped to express. At the same time there was an artistic flowering in both poetry and visual arts. A cultural nexus of art and homosexual eros was thus established and homosexuality became a continuing part of Greek culture. Athens is always central to our

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appreciation of Greek history but we can be seriously mistaken if we take homosexuality to be an Athenian habit or try to explain it in purely Athenian terms. Athens became more peaceful in the 7th and 5th centuries but this was not true of the Peloponnese and similarly there may have been democratisation of culture in Athens - but not in Sparta or Macedonia. There is in fact evidence that romantic eros was seen as homosexual all over Greece. Sparta, even with its relatively free women, had homosexual relationships built into the structure of the training all young Spartan men received. In other Dorian areas also homosexuality was widely accepted. Thebes saw in the 4th century the creation of a battalion of homosexual lovers - the Sacred Band. In Crete we have evidence of ritualised abduction of younger by older men. This being so, it seems to be methodologically unsound to use events in Athenian social history to explain the nature of eros in early Greece even if perforce most of our evidence comes from there. Once established the link between homosexual eros and art gained wide acceptance. This is reflected in the cultural product of the archaic period. For poets eros was a major source of subject and inspiration. Solon may be taken as an example Blest is the man who loves and after early play Whereby his limbs are supple made and strong Retiring to his house with wine and song Toys with a fair boy on his breast the livelong day! Although poems were dedicated to women what is particular to the archaic period is the valuing of homosexual over heterosexual eros. One of the most extraordinary features of the period was the homosexualisation of myth. The passion of Achilles and Patroclus was similarly cast in sexual terms. The acme of homosexual love in Athens came about at the end of the Persistratid tyranny at Athens. It fell for a variety of reasons and there was certainly no immediate switch to democracy but in later Athenian history two lovers, Aristogeiton and Harmodios were given the credit of bringing down the tyrants. Thucydides makes it clear that what happened was that Hipparchus, the brother of the tyrant Hippias, was killed because he made a pass at Harmodios and when rejected proceeded to victimise his family [8]. Thucydides regards all this as slightly sordid, although it has been suggested his motives in rubbishing the tyrannicides was to promote the Alcmeonids as founders of Athenian democracy [9]. Whatever actually happened an extraordinary cult of the two lovers grew up in Athens with their descendants being given state honours such as front seats at the theatre even at the height of radical democracy when such honours were frowned upon. In Athens at least this cult was used repeatedly to give kudos to homosexual couples and what they could achieve for society. The theme was exploited philosophically by Plato. In the Symposium he applies the terminology of procreation to homosexual love and says that, while it does not produce children it brings forth beautiful ideas, art and actions which were eternally valuable. Although Plato visualises relationships in lover-beloved terms his philosophy makes it clear that reciprocity was expected between the lovers. More testimony to homosexual Eros effect on culture can be seen in the visual arts, both on vase decorations and in statues.

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Chapter 7 : The Myth Of Homosexuality In Ancient Greece

Greek homosexuality which involved pederasty (sexual relations between a man and a boy with the boy as a passive partner) was a central feature of Greek civilization among the upper classes.

Pederasty in ancient Greece A nude youth plays the aulos for a banqueter: Attic red-figure cup by the Euaion Painter , c. It was a relationship between an older male and an adolescent youth. A boy was considered a "boy" until he was able to grow a full beard. In Athens the older man was called erastes. He was to educate, protect, love, and provide a role model for his eromenos , whose reward for him lay in his beauty, youth, and promise. The roots of Greek pederasty lie in the tribal past of Greece, before the rise of the city-state as a unit of political organization. These tribal communities were organized according to age groups. When it came time for a boy to embrace the age group of the adult and to "become a man," he would leave the tribe in the company of an older man for a period of time that constituted a rite of passage. This older man would educate the youth in the ways of Greek life and the responsibilities of adulthood. Greek boys no longer left the confines of the community, but rather paired up with older men within the confines of the city. These men, like their earlier counterparts, played an educational and instructive role in the lives of their young companions; likewise, just as in earlier times, they shared a sexual relationship with their boys. Penetrative sex, however, was seen as demeaning for the passive partner, and outside the socially accepted norm. This waiting period allowed the boy to ensure that his suitor was not merely interested in him for sexual purposes, but felt a genuine emotional affection for him and was interested in assuming the mentor role assigned to him in the pederastic paradigm. To love a boy below the age of twelve was considered inappropriate, but no evidence exists of any legal penalties attached to this sort of practice. Thus, the age limit for the younger member of a pederastic relationship seems to have extended from 12 to about 17 years of age. It was an important element in civil life, the military, philosophy and the arts. In the military[edit] Main article: Homosexuality in the militaries of ancient Greece The Sacred Band of Thebes , a separate military unit reserved only for men and their beloved, is usually considered the prime example of how the ancient Greeks used love between soldiers in a troop to boost their fighting spirit. The Thebans attributed to the Sacred Band the power of Thebes for the generation before its fall to Philip II of Macedon , who was so impressed with their bravery during battle, he erected a monument that still stands today on their gravesite. He also gave a harsh criticism of the Spartan views of the band: For men of the same tribe little value one another when dangers press; but a band cemented by friendship grounded upon love is never to be broken. Meleager , Achilles , Aristomenes , Cimon , and Epaminondas. He answered their request, bringing his lover to watch. Leading the charge against the Eretrians he brought the Chalcidians to victory at the cost of his own life. The Chalcidians erected a tomb for him in the marketplace in gratitude. Although this did not occur during the Lelantine War example it was still a heroic act for Cleomachus and even a perfect time to show his lover his selfless ways. Gender representations in Greek theatre[edit] The gender representations in Greek theatre was that of the stereotypical roles within Ancient Greece. Men were sought to be manipulative, powerful, had control over their own freewill, and control over their surroundings. Women were expected to be contained to the house and to do all the house work. They were also expected to produce offspring and act modestly. The women, or better known in the play as the Bacchae, are manipulated by the god named Dionysus. Dionysus is a strong and witty male character within the play and is written to easily manipulate the women due to this. In the same play, when the women start to gain control over themselves, they are perceived to be "wild" and "loose". Love between adult men[edit] Given the importance in Greek society of cultivating the masculinity of the adult male and the perceived feminizing effect of being the passive partner, relations between adult men of comparable social status were considered highly problematic, and usually associated with social stigma. According to contemporary opinion, Greek males who engaged in passive anal sex after reaching the age of manhood "â€” at which point they were expected to take the reverse role in pederastic relationships and become

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the active and dominant member "thereby were feminized or "made a woman" of themselves. There is ample evidence in the theater of Aristophanes that derides these passive men and gives a glimpse of the type of biting social opprobrium and shame "atimia" heaped upon them by their society. Achilles and Patroclus[edit] Achilles and Patroclus The first recorded appearance of a deep emotional bond between adult men in ancient Greek culture was in the Iliad BC. Homer does not depict the relationship between Achilles and Patroclus as sexual. The ancient Greeks emphasised the supposed age difference between the two by portraying Patroclus with a beard in paintings and pottery, while Achilles is clean-shaven, although Achilles was an almost godlike figure in Greek society. This led to a disagreement on whom to make the erastes and whom the eromenos, since the Homeric tradition made Patroclus out to be older but Achilles stronger. Other ancients held that Achilles and Patroclus were simply close friends. The love in these poems is sometimes requited, and sometimes not. Sappho is thought to have written close to 12,000 lines of poetry on her love for other women. Of these, only about 1,600 lines have survived. As a result of her fame in antiquity, she and her land have become emblematic of love between women. In addition to being a poet, Sappho was the head of what was known as a thiasos. Thiasoi were communities of women in which Greek women could receive a limited form of education. Critically, however, girls in these communities also experienced same-sex love, sometimes for their mistresses Sappho writes of her love for various students of hers and sometimes for each other. As the polis evolved, however, marriage came to be an integral instrument for the organization of the culture, and women were confined to their houses; the thiasoi were no more. Girls were taught from their infancies that it was their duty and destiny in life to give their love to the men who would one day be their husbands. Female-female love had no place within the constraints of this new social organization. Pedagogic erotic relationships are also documented for Sparta, together with athletic nudity for women. Dover and many others. These scholars have shown that same-sex relations were openly practised, largely with official sanction, in many areas of life from the 7th century BC until the Roman era. Some scholars believe that same-sex relationships, especially pederasty, were common only among the aristocracy, and that such relationships were not widely practised by the common people demos. 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," p. Stein for a collection of essays, *Forms of Desire: Sexual Orientation and the Social Constructionist Controversy*, Hubbard states that "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 as "essential aspects of human identity Hubbard utilizes both schools of thought when these seem pertinent to the ancient texts, pp. Indeed Plato himself eventually came to hold this view. At one time he had written that same-sex lovers were far more blessed than ordinary mortals. He even gave them a headstart in the great race to get back to heaven, their mutual love refeathering their mottled wings. Now he seemed to contradict himself. In his ideal city, he says in his last, posthumously published work known as *The Laws*, homosexual sex will be treated the same way as incest. In 1958, a conference on Alexander the Great was stormed as a paper about his homosexuality was about to be presented.

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Chapter 8 : Homosexuality in the militaries of ancient Greece - Simple English Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Pederasty in ancient Greece was a socially acknowledged romantic relationship between an adult male (the erastes) and a younger male (the eromenos) usually in his teens. It was characteristic of the Archaic and Classical periods.

Terminology[edit] Kouros representing an idealized youth, c. He is aware of his attractiveness, but self-absorbed in his relationship with those who desire him. He will allow the lover to greet him by touching, affectionately, his genitals and his face, while he looks, himself, demurely at the ground. Though the object of importunate solicitation, he is himself not in need of anything beyond himself. He is something like a god, or the statue of a god. Cretan pederasty The Greek practice of pederasty came suddenly into prominence at the end of the Archaic period of Greek history; there is a brass plaque from Crete, about BC, which is the oldest surviving representation of pederastic custom. Such representations appear from all over Greece in the next century; literary sources show it as being established custom in many cities by the 5th century BC. A man Ancient Greek: The youth received gifts, and the philetor along with the friends went away with him for two months into the countryside, where they hunted and feasted. At the end of this time, the philetor presented the youth with three contractually required gifts: Other costly gifts followed. Upon their return to the city, the youth sacrificed the ox to Zeus, and his friends joined him at the feast. He received special clothing that in adult life marked him as kleinos, "famous, renowned". The initiate was called a parastatheis, "he who stands beside", perhaps because, like Ganymede the cup-bearer of Zeus, he stood at the side of the philetor during meals in the andreion and served him from the cup that had been ceremonially presented. In this interpretation, the formal custom reflects myth and ritual. However, according to Aeschines, Athenian fathers would pray that their sons would be handsome and attractive, with the full knowledge that they would then attract the attention of men and "be the objects of fights because of erotic passions". Boys, however, usually had to be courted and were free to choose their mate, while marriages for girls were arranged for economic and political advantage at the discretion of father and suitor. For those lovers who continued their lovemaking after their beloveds had matured, the Greeks made allowances, saying, "You can lift up a bull, if you carried the calf. However, if they did not perform those specific functions, did not present themselves for the allocation of those functions and declared themselves ineligible if they were somehow mistakenly elected to perform those specific functions, they were safe from prosecution and punishment. As non-citizens visiting or residing in a city-state could not perform official functions in any case whatsoever, they could prostitute themselves as much as they wanted. In his speech Against Timarchus in BC, the Athenian politician Aeschines argues against further allowing Timarchus, an experienced middle-aged politician, certain political rights as Attic law prohibited anyone who had prostituted himself from exercising those rights [46] and Timarchus was known to have spent his adolescence as the sexual partner of a series of wealthy men in order to obtain money. Aeschines acknowledges his own dalliances with beautiful boys, the erotic poems he dedicated to these youths, and the scrapes he has gotten into as a result of his affairs, but emphasizes that none of these were mediated by money. Socrates remarks in the dialogue Phaedrus that sexual pederasty is driven by the appetital part of the soul, but can be balanced by self-control and reason. He likens wanton lust for a boy to allowing a disobedient horse to control a chariot, but remarks that sexual desire for a boy if combined with a love for their other qualities is acceptable. For I know not any greater blessing to a young man who is beginning in life than a virtuous lover, or to a lover than a beloved youth. For the principle, I say, neither kindred, nor honor, nor wealth, nor any motive is able to implant so well as love. Of what am I speaking? And we all accuse the Cretans of concocting the story about Ganymede. There is some pleasure in loving a boy paidophilein , since once in fact even the son of Cronus that is, Zeus , king of immortals, fell in love with Ganymede, seized him, carried him off to Olympus , and made him divine, keeping the lovely bloom of boyhood paideia. Neither Homer nor Hesiod ever explicitly ascribes homosexual experiences to the gods or to heroes. The 5th century BC poet Pindar constructed the story of a sexual pederastic relationship between Poseidon and Pelops , this

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was intended to replace an earlier story of cannibalism that Pindar deemed an unsavoury representation of the Gods. Though examples of such a custom exist in earlier Greek works, myths providing examples of young men who were the lovers of gods began to emerge in classical literature, around the 6th century BC. All the Olympian gods except Ares are purported to have had these relationships, which some scholars argue demonstrates that the specific customs of pederastia originated in initiatory rituals. The standing lovers engage in intercrural sex. Animal gifts—most commonly hares and roosters, but also deer and felines—point toward hunting as an aristocratic pastime and as a metaphor for sexual pursuit. The youthful beloved is never pictured with an erection; his penis "remains flaccid even in circumstances to which one would expect the penis of any healthy adolescent to respond willy-nilly". In the 6th century BC, he is a young beardless man with long hair, of adult height and physique, usually nude. As the 5th century begins, he has become smaller and slighter, "barely pubescent", and often draped as a girl would be. No inferences about social customs should be based on this element of the courtship scene alone. Some portions of the Theognidean corpus are probably not by the individual from Megara, but rather represent "several generations of wisdom poetry". Ibycus came from Rhegium in the Greek west and entertained the court of Polycrates in Samos with pederastic verses. By contrast with Theognis, these poets portray a version of pederasty that is non-pedagogical, focused exclusively on love and seduction. Theocritus, a Hellenistic poet, describes a kissing contest for youths that took place at the tomb of a certain Diocles, renowned for friendship; he notes that invoking Ganymede was proper to the occasion. The composition of these scenes is the same as that for depictions of women mounting men who are seated and aroused for intercourse. A man who acted as the receiver during anal intercourse may have been the recipient of the insult "kinaidos", meaning effeminate. From the poems of Alcaeus we learn that the lover would customarily invite his eromenos to dine with him. Attic red-figure cup from Tarquinia, c. Spartan views on pederasty and homoeroticism were much more austere than those of other parts of Greece. Xenophon says in *Constitution of the Lacedaemonians* that Spartan customs were unsuited to pederasty: Scanlon believes Sparta, during its Dorian polis time, is thought to be the first city to practice athletic nudity, and one of the first to formalize pederasty. Athenian pederasty In Athens, as elsewhere, pederastia appears to have been a characteristic of the aristocracy. Another Boeotian pederastic myth is the story of Narcissus. The limited survival and cataloguing of pottery that can be proven to have been made in Boeotia diminishes the value of this evidence in distinguishing a specifically local tradition of pederastia. One of the first to do so was John Addington Symonds, who wrote his seminal work *A Problem in Greek Ethics* in 1893, but after a private edition of 10 copies only in 1894 could the work really be published, in revised form. The text examines homoerotic practices of all types, not only pederastic ones, and ranges over cultures spanning the whole globe. Mainstream Ancient Greek studies however had historically omitted references of the widespread practice of homosexuality. It would not be until 1913 and K. Other scholars point to artwork on vases, poetry and philosophical works such as the Platonic discussion of *anteros*, "love returned", all of which show tenderness and desire and love on the part of the eromenos matching and responding to that of the erastes.

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Chapter 9 : Pederasty in ancient Greece - Wikipedia

Homosexuality in Ancient Greece: The Truth lesgaybitrans. Kenneth J.: *Greek Homosexuality*, Vintage Books, Thornton, Bruce S.: *Eros: the Myth of Ancient Greek Sexuality*, Westview Press.

Greek Religion Timeline Homosexuality in Ancient Greece "The noble lover of beauty engages in love wherever he sees excellence and splendid natural endowment without regard for any difference in physiological detail. The ancient Greeks are widely known for their homosexual exploits. Many ordinary people are aware of Greek homosexual love poetry, the same-sex relations of Greek gods and heroes, and the homosexual relationship between Alexander the Great and Hephaestion. This is only a recent development. Until the second half of the 20th century, historians avoided saying much about the sexuality of the ancient Greeks out of sense of propriety. In , an English classicist named John Addington Symonds published *A Problem in Greek Ethics* addressing homosexuality in Ancient Greece, but it was provided only to "medical psychologists and jurists" and the number of copies was intended to remain under 100. Dover, published in 1953. By contrast, ancient Greek homosexuality is now a popular topic, and those who argue for full acceptance of the homosexual lifestyle regularly appeal to these practices and attitudes of the widely-respected ancient Greeks. However, the practices of the ancient Greeks differ significantly from those generally advocated by moderns. Greek homosexual activities were practiced as expressions of love and devotion, but were also firmly embedded in their culture of social status and therefore had distinct limitations. Forms and Prevalence of Homosexuality in Ancient Greece Homosexual relationships seem to have been prevalent in ancient Greece. Aristotle stated that the Cretans encouraged homosexuality as a population controller on the island community in his *Politics*. Plato is quoted as commenting: Homosexuality is regarded as shameful by barbarians and by those who live under despotic governments just as philosophy is regarded as shameful by them, because it is apparently not in the interest of such rulers to have great ideas engendered in their subjects, or powerful friendships or passionate love-all of which homosexuality is particularly apt to produce. Vases portray numerous homoerotic relationships and hundreds of inscriptions celebrate the love of youths. Famous politicians, warriors, artists, and writers are believed to have had homosexual relationships. The form of homosexuality that was most common in ancient Greece was pederasty, meaning a relationship between an adult man and a male youth. For the Greeks, pederasty was more than a sexual pastime or preference - it was nearly a social institution. A same-sex relationship between an older man, probably in his 20s or 30s, known as the *erastes*, and a beardless boy, the *eromenos* or *paidika*, became a cultural ideal. The relationship was regarded as mutually beneficial, as the older man would educate, protect, love, and provide a role model for his lover, while the *eromenos* offered his partner with beauty, youth, admiration, and love. The boy was not to submit too easily, and if pursued by more than one man, was to show discretion and pick the nobler one. There is evidence that penetration was often avoided by having the *erastes* face his beloved and place his penis between the thighs of the *eromenos*, which is known as intercrural sex. The relationship was to be temporary and should end upon the boy reaching adulthood. Guests reclined on couches in front of low tables laid with light snacks and a mildly alcoholic water-wine mixture. The wine was poured by young male or female slaves, often chosen for their beauty. There were games, entertainments performed by the slaves, speeches, and conversations. The evening often ended with a drunken riot through the streets. According to the *Oxford Dictionary of the Classical World*, the symposion was the main reason for the importance of homosexuality in ancient Greece, as it became the focus of expressions of love, sex, and liaisons both physical and spiritual. Homosexual liaisons occurred both between drinkers and with slave boys, and the "idealization of these emotions inspired some of the highest expressions of love in European literature. However, social status was of utmost importance, as was the differentiation between the active and passive roles in male homosexuality. Given that only free adult men had full social status, women and male slaves were not problematic sexual partners. Sex between freemen, however, was problematic for status. The central distinction in ancient Greek

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sexual relations was between taking an active or insertive role, versus a passive or penetrated one. The passive role was acceptable only for inferiors, such as women, slaves, or male youths who were not yet citizens. Terms for the passive role were *muliebria pati*, "to submit to what is done to women" and *aselgainein*, "to defile oneself. A free male youth was a more noble partner than a male slave and perhaps more than a woman as well because he could be from a noble family and would eventually become a free citizen. But it also avoided homosexual sex between equals, which was problematic for reasons of status: Women and slaves had no respect to worry about losing, and it appears that a male citizen who had been an *eromenos* in his youth lost no respect for it - in fact a history with a noble partner could be an honor - but he was expected to take the active role whether with a woman or a man now that he had become an adult. Here the character of the Athenian stranger rejects homosexual behavior as "unnatural" *para physin*, describes it as an "enormity" or "crime" *tolmema*, and attributes it to "unbridled lust. There were stories of same-sex exploits associated with Greek gods including Zeus, and other key figures in Greek myth and literature, perhaps including Achilles and Hercules. Plato, in the *Symposium*, argues for an army to be comprised of same-sex lovers. Thebes did form such a regiment, the Sacred Band of Thebes, formed of soldiers and renowned in the ancient world for their valor in battle. An Historical Perspective"