RIKKE ANDREASSEN

Sex and Women in the Archive and New Imaginaries of Female Same-Sex Relations in the Late Nineteenth Century

ABSTRACT

The article aims to contribute to queer histories of marginalised people and those who have left behind limited traces. It analyses medical sources informing about female same-sex relations among poor and marginalised women in Copenhagen, Denmark, during the late nineteenth century. The medical sources repeatedly mention how women in prostitution engaged in sexual and romantic relations with one other. The article provides examples of how female same-sex relations were described as passionate and dramatic, as well as violent, and proposes an expanded notion of female same-sex relations to accommodate "grim" stories of intimate partner violence and death. Furthermore, the medical reports associated women's relations with carnal sex, leading to a reflection upon early lesbian history's tendency to de-sexualize same-sex relationships. Finally, the article suggests that it might not have been the gender of a woman's same-sex partner but rather the woman's sexual activity, that caused condemnation. As the medical sources are confined to inform about women's encounters with power authorities, such as doctors and police, I employ "imaginary scenarios" (Hartman 2021) to be able to represent the same-sex relations in a more profound way.

Keywords: women's relationships, archives, lesbian history, prostitution, sex work, nineteenth century

DOI: 10.34041/ln.v29.951
lambda nordica **2–3/2024**

LGBTQ+ RESEARCHERS OFTEN face challenges locating historical sources that contain information about the many people who have not left behind any written traces. Rydström describes how historical sources often reveal significant gendered differences: "While lesbians frequently find the richest sources of their history in a female world of love and ritual … gay men … find themselves trapped in a male world of crime and violence" (Rydström 2007, 13).[1] Phrased differently, sources about male same-sex activities (which were once illegal) can be found in penal codes and court records, while accounts of female same-sex relations (which were often not prohibited) can mainly be found in love letters and diaries. However, while letters and diaries were being written across all social classes in the nineteenth century, it was primarily upper- and middle-class families with spacious houses with attics, who were able to keep the letters and diaries for future historical research. Thus, LGBTQ+ researchers who wish to consider poor, working-class or marginalised women, non-binary and trans people must look elsewhere – and find new ways of looking – for historical sources. In this article, I present new sources, specifically medical sources, that shed light on female same-sex relations among poor and marginalised women in Copenhagen, Denmark, during the late nineteenth century. As these sources were not written by the women themselves, I employ "imaginary scenarios" (Hartman 2021) to represent the same-sex relations in a more profound way.

The article begins with a brief description of the empirical material and context, outlining the era of so-called statutory prostitution (1874–1906). This is followed by a discussion of the theoretical framework and analytical approaches. The analysis is divided into four related parts. First, I show how the medical sources depict female same-sex relations as widespread among women selling sex. My findings suggest that female same-sex relations were perceived as a sexual practice, hence they did not necessarily lead to sexual categorization. Second, I describe how female same-sex relations were portrayed as passionate and dramatic, as well as violent, and propose an expanded notion of female same-sex relations that can accommodate the "grim" stories of intimate partner

violence and death. Third, I demonstrate how these women's relationships were associated with and described in terms of carnal sex. This prompts reflection on why some prior scholarship on nineteenth-century female same-sex relations has had a tendency to de-sexualize same-sex relationships. Fourth, I highlight how female same-sex relationships were described as normal and widely known; relatedly, I discuss how it might not have been the gender of a woman's same-sex partner but rather her sexual activity that caused condemnation. Finally, I conclude by inviting scholars to include marginalised individuals and those who have not left many historical traces in our histories of sexuality.

I use the term "women" since that was the term the people whose stories I analyse used; if they had lived today, they might have chosen different terms (such as "non-binary" or "transgendered") to describe themselves. I do not use the terms "lesbian" or "homosexual", as these terms were not used by women engaging in same-sex relations before the interwar period.

Empirical sources and historical context

In the nineteenth century, fear of venereal disease was widespread, and many medical doctors and legal authorities, in particular, blamed sex workers for the spread of these diseases. In response to this, sex work became regulated under the "law about statutory prostitution", which was in effect from 1874 to 1906. The law required that women selling sex be registered and strictly controlled: they had to undergo regular gynaecological examinations and live in so-called "public houses". If the police suspected a woman of engaging in sex work, they could arrest her. On her first arrest, she would receive a warning; second arrest would result in a prison or workhouse sentence; and a third arrest would result in her being assigned to work in prostitution. Thus, the legislation stripped poor women of their right to choose an occupation, as well as their privacy, bodily autonomy and self-determination (Pedersen 2000). The legislation reflects societal views of gender, body and social class at the time.[2]

In Copenhagen, women working in prostitution were admitted to a specific hospital when they were ill. This hospital was run by the medical

doctor Rudolf Bergh. Bergh wrote annual reports and research articles, including articles describing his research on the bodies of the hospitalised women. In his reports and articles, Bergh repeatedly mentioned that the women working selling sex engaged in sexual and romantic relations with one another. Today, Bergh's writings are of particular interest as they are one of the only known sources that provide insight into same-sex relations among lower-class women.

A very large number of the sex workers were hospitalised on a regular basis. In 1886, a representative year, Bergh wrote: "As usual, a rather high percentage (an average of 14 percent) of the total number of harlots were in the hospital ... The number of harlots (429–471) has over the year yielded 1,523 hospitalisations of all in all 426 different women" (1886a, 585).[3] In other words, an average of 14 percent of the women working in prostitution were in the hospital at any given time, and 426 of the women were hospitalised that year – several of them more than once – resulting in 1,523 admissions in 1886. While it is fair to assume that Bergh had a good overview of the sex workers, as he met a majority of them in his hospital, it is important to keep in mind that Bergh wrote from a particular point of view. As a gynaecologist, he was concerned with venereal diseases, and, consequently, he focused on sexual practices and the spread of disease. Hierarchically, the distance between him and the working-class women was vast, not only because of gender, education and social class, but also because women admitted to his hospital were not allowed to leave before their treatment was complete. While there is no reason to doubt what Bergh wrote, his writings represent a male, medical authority's view of female same-sex relations. His audience was his medical peers, and his writings were intended to contribute to medical discussions on venereal diseases. He was never particularly interested in same-sex relations; he mentioned them only in passing. This lack of interest, combined with the medical style of writing – in which somatic details were noted but personal and psychological aspects were left out – leaves me with a one-sided story, where same-sex activities were noted but not socially or morally reflected upon. Most importantly, the women's voices and experiences were not recorded.

For this article, I mainly draw on Bergh's annual reports and three of his research articles: two about tattoos (Bergh 1891; 1902) and one about female genitalia (Bergh 1900). In all three articles, Bergh discusses female same-sex relations. In addition, I briefly draw upon other medical reports discussing sex work, as well as police reports on women selling sex.

Theoretical inspiration

Theoretically, I am inspired by scholars who have endeavored to write the histories of marginalised people and those who have left behind limited traces. In her article "Can the Subaltern Speak?", Spivak (1988) famously questioned whether marginalised individuals can truly have a voice in history. She further developed her argument by suggesting that teachers and researchers should unlearn their privileges and begin "learning to learn from below" (Spivak 2009, x). Cvetkovich (2003) advises a different path – namely to explore unconventional archives for sources on queer intimacies, as "gay and lesbian cultures often leave ephemeral and unusual traces" (2003, 8). Her aim is to make lesbian and queer culture(s) visible, as the lack of conventional archives tends to erase these perspectives (ibid., 9). Spivak's post-colonial perspective can be said to have been advanced by decoloniality (e.g., Maldonado-Torres 2007; Quijano 2000), as listening to voices from below often requires new ways of thinking about history, and therefore a willingness to rethink history as we know it.

In her analyses of slave archives, Hartman (2008) has described the challenges of working with records that are confined to detailing individuals' encounters with authorities, where "the stories that exist [in the archives] are not about them, but rather about the violence, excess, mendacity, and reason that seized hold of their lives" (2008, 2). Writing history with one-sided and limited archival sources is complicated, as the tradition of "[h]istory pledges to be faithful to the limits of facts, evidence, and archive" (Hartman 2008, 9). Differently, from this tradition, Hartman longs to "to write a new story, one unfettered by the constraints of the legal document" (2008, 9). She has developed this position further in her endeavours to write the history of Black women's intimate

relations in New York and Philadelphia at the turn of the twentieth century (2021). While doing so, she similarly lacked sources emanating from the individuals whose lives, dreams and hopes she aimed to describe, and was instead left with public sources, such as police reports and sociological surveys, which offered only a narrow and one-sided version of the women's lives. To Hartman, these sources failed to capture the women's lived experiences. Thus, to do justice to these women, Hartman created what can be termed "imaginary scenarios": "pictures anticipated, but not yet located" (2021, 20), where "we catch a glimpse of this other life" (ibid.). In other words, Hartman wrote (his)stories about *what might have been*, to fill the void in the archive. When researching marginalised individuals – such as young, poor, Black American women or poor, working-class women selling sex in Denmark during the late nineteenth century and at the turn of the nineteenth century – the conventional historical approach of describing what can be proven in archival documents offers a poor route to understanding.

I am inspired by Hartman's invitation "to speculate, listen intently, read and honor silence" (2021, 30) when approaching archival sources; I am also inspired by the call from post-colonial and decolonial scholars to look for silences and absences in historical narratives, listen for marginalised voices, and rethink and challenge current understandings. Both Hartman and the scholarly traditions of post-colonialism and decoloniality encourage us to depart from familiar routes and narratives in order to generate new stories and understandings. In my research, these theoretical insights and invitations have served as both a methodological tool and a theoretical framework, enabling me to uncover stories and histories of female same-sex relations.

Sapphism, *amor lesbicus* and tribades

Bergh was in favour of examining and treating sex workers for venereal diseases, yet he was critical of the prostitution legislation. One of the reasons for his critical attitude was that the law forced young women to spend time in each other's company, which – according to Bergh – could "convert" them to *amor lesbicus*. Bergh wrote:

> The so unfortunate Act of April 10th, 1874 (§ 4) sends a number of very young individuals to the [forced] workhouse, where they stay without proper supervision; [the new women who are] depraved to a lesser degree [are now spending time] among very depraved [women], and learn about amor lesbicus and other immoralities. (Bergh 1902, 5)[4]

Here, Bergh was claiming that young women were being introduced to same-sex activity by other (most likely older) women in the workhouse. This parallels contemporary understandings of male homosexuality as a phenomenon into which young men may be seduced by older men (Nyegaard 2018). Going through police reports, where arrests of women suspected of selling sex were recorded, I came across of the case of Ane Marie Andersen, who was arrested for theft in April 1876. Ane, who was 16 years old at the time of her arrest, was questioned about both the theft and her sexual activities, as she was "under suspicion of living a loose lifestyle" (Copenhagen Police, 1876).[5] The following year (1877), she was arrested again, and this time she was sentenced to the forced workhouse. Rather than imagining Ane being seduced by an older, depraved woman in the workhouse, I envision the gender-segregated workhouse as a space where female friendship and romantic relations might have flourished; a space, where young women, such as Ane, who were likely distressed by their arrests, could find comfort in each other's company.

In his reports, Bergh repeatedly noted that many women working in prostitution engaged in romantic and sexual relations with one other. Among these women, he found sapphism to be widespread: "… the not least among prostitutes widespread sapphism" (Bergh 1900, 1350). Bergh did not judge the relations; he simply noted their existence: "… those sapphic relations are not at all … rare [among female sex workers]" (Bergh 1883, 633).[6]

Bergh described how female lovers spent nights together in the brothel: "It happens often that such a woman, most often the older of the two, pays the brothel hostess in order to be able to spend the night with her lover" (Bergh 1878, 676).[7] First, I read this as a description of

how the women working in prostitution had female partners outside of prostitution who spent nights at the brothels. Since visitors were not allowed in the brothels, the partners would have had to pay the brothel owner or supervisor. Then, I read Bergh's comment as an illustration of how sex workers, who were partners but worked in different brothels, managed to spend nights together. But the sources leave me with silences and voids, as it is hard to know whether this was actually a common practice or merely a rumour Bergh had come across. I imagine that the women experienced the nights they spent with their partners as safe and relaxing – a reprieve from their work serving male customers. I envision these women sneaking out at night, hiding in the shadows as they walked the few streets from one brothel to another, feeling a sense of delight as they looked forward to spending the night with their lover. I picture the other woman, waiting for her lover, sweet-talking the brothel hostess into allowing her yet another night with her girlfriend. In Ane's police file, I can see that she would sometimes spend the night in a particular brothel, where her sister and at least two other women worked (Copenhagen police). But whether this happened often, as Bergh claimed, most likely depends on whether Bergh knew about it from the women involved in same-sex relationships or from some other source – and I cannot know.

While sapphism seems to have been widespread in the prostitution industry, Bergh noted that it was widespread outside of prostitution too: "Internal love connections between the public women (as well as between young women in general) are not rare … These sapphic relationships have existed since ancient times and maybe most often outside of prostitution" (Bergh 1878, 676).[8] This description naturalizes female same-sex relationships by portraying them as a part of human history and as present in all social classes. Thus, Bergh presents female same-sex relationships as a general and common phenomenon, consistent with global and historical accounts of same-sex relationships (Rupp 2009).

In Bergh's writings, sapphism was framed as a sexual *practice*. While the German medical doctor Westphal had published his article about "contrary sexual feeling" (*contrare Sexualempfindung*) in 1869, which

laid the foundation for a medical understanding of same-sex desires as a medical condition and, thus, an identity, Bergh did not associate female same-sex sexuality with any medical condition. Although the medical discussions about "homosexuality" as a condition took off in the early twentieth century (Lybeck 2015, 8ff.), female same-sex activities were mainly treated as a sexual practice in the final decades of the nineteenth century. Thus, Bergh's medical frame of reference was not Westphal but rather the French medical doctor Parent-Duchatelet, whom Bergh cited several times. In 1836, Parent-Duchatelet published *De la prostitution dans la ville de Paris, considérée sous le rapport de l'hygiène publique, de la morale et de l'administration*. In it, he wrote that "around one-quarter of the public women in Paris are tribades"; Bergh added to this: "which for both Paris and Copenhagen does not seem to be too high an estimate" (Bergh 1891, 12).[9] In 1886, Bergh also referred to Parent-Duchatelet but suggested that the number of tribades was slightly lower in Copenhagen than in Paris: "Parent-Duchatelet … estimates the number of prostitutes in Paris who engage in sapphism or reciprocal masturbation to be one-quarter of all; the number might be somewhat lower here" (Bergh 1886b, 14).[10] Similar to Bergh, the Danish medical doctor Ehlers noted that many sex workers were engaged in same-sex relationships. He warned against the brothels, as he felt they had "become a kind of perversion academy for Amor Lesbicus, Sadism, yes even for Sodomy, so they no longer serve their original purpose" (Ehlers 1896, 48).[11] While it is not possible to determine the exact number of women engaging in same-sex relationships, the number was likely high, if we are to trust the medical doctors.

Writings by doctors like Bergh, Parent-Duchatelet and Ehlers were intended to improve venereal disease control, and their descriptions of the women's same-sex relationships were therefore limited to accounts of sexual practices. However, it is likely that emotional comfort, financial support and friendship played just as important a role as sex for the women engaging in these relationships (Frydendahl Larsen 2011).

Female lovers and intimate partner violence

Bergh also mentioned same-sex relationships indirectly in his hospital reports. Every year, Bergh wrote about women who were hospitalised due to so-called "pseudo-venereal affections" (Bergh 1877, 573).[12] Some of these illnesses were caused by exposure to violence, including what we would term intimate partner violence today. Indeed, in each of his annual reports, Bergh noted that the women were exposed to violence from their "male and female lovers" (e.g., Bergh 1881, 712).[13] As he tellingly wrote: "These injuries [which caused hospitalization] stemmed in a large part, or even for the most part, from these (66 [hospitalised]) individuals' male lovers or (often just as violent) female lovers" (Bergh 1883, 633).[14] The reports illustrate that violence, including intimate partner violence, was an integrated part of the women's daily lives – regardless of whether they were partnered with male or female lovers. In Bergh's reports, male and female lovers occupied the same position, and he did not differentiate between them in his descriptions.

Early on (1870s, 1880, 1882), Bergh wrote that "male lovers and female lovers" submitted their partners to violence, but after 1882 (Bergh 1882, 693), he specifically commented that the women's female lovers were just as violent as their male lovers. I interpret this addition as an indication of his need to specify that female lovers were as violent as male lovers, perhaps because readers of his previous hospital reports might have questioned this. I also note that Bergh did not feel a need to explain that the women could have female lovers, only the extent of the brutality that these female lovers could display. To me, this suggests that his readers in the medical community did not question the gender diversity of lovers.

Sometimes Bergh would elaborate upon the violence:

> Five individuals were hospitalised with severe contusions of the orbital region [area around the eye] or the upper lip, [as a] result of blows, for four [of them inflicted] by male lovers, for the fifth by her female lover, who was jealous because of her budding inclination for a younger harlot ([she was hospitalised for] 25 days). (Bergh 1877, 573)[15]

Hartman describes the difficulties of inheriting an archive of violence (2008, 6). While I do not intend to compare the life of an enslaved woman in the eighteenth century with the life of a woman working in prostitution in the late nineteenth century, the violent nature of the archives appears similar, leading me to struggle in writing a history of individuals whose lives I can only glimpse through descriptions of the violence committed against them. Furthermore, the violent records I am left with are written by a representative of the very same power structure which oppressed the women, stripped them of their rights and forced them into prostitution. How am I to interpret the story of a woman who was hospitalised for twenty-five days, apparently because her female lover had beaten her? Can I trust that she formed a same-sex relationship with a jealous partner, and that she was developing feelings for or desires toward a new woman? Or can I only conclude that this narrative seemed a plausible story to the medical doctor in charge of her treatment? Hartman asks, "How does one revisit the scene of subjection without replicating the grammar of violence?" (2008, 4). In other words, how do I write a same-sex love story based on a minor archival note about somatic details of intimate partner violence? At the moment, I am unable to use this note without reproducing the stereotype that violence is a sign of love.

While I give up on imagining the love story of the woman who was hospitalised for twenty-five days, I will make do with noticing that Bergh's reports mark an equality of same-sex relations and heterosexual relations within the medical community; here, men and women seem to have been equals as both partners and perpetrators of violence. Obviously, this may not have been the case for the women involved in the relationships. It is not possible to know from the medical sources how they understood their same-sex relationships. I suspect that they might have viewed them as a relief, as I indicate above in my imaginary framing of them as a reprieve from their work of selling sex to male customers. Female same-sex relationships might also have functioned as a safeguard against further exploitation, as Ehlers notes: "Every public woman, who is not inclined to *amor lesbicus*, is in the clutches of a

pimp" (Ehlers 1996, 62).[16] Perhaps engaging in same-sex relationships prevented pimps from interfering in their work. But I also imagine that many women were aware that forming intimate relationships with men could serve as a way out of prostitution, as a woman could withdraw from statutory prostitution through marriage; legally, this was not the case with same-sex relationships.

Relationships with passion and drama

In the source material, the passion and fervour of the same-sex relationships stand out. Bergh wrote:

> In these relationships, an incredible passion and jealousy can sometimes develop. Lately (Jan. 1878), such an individual was admitted [in a state of] dying [to the hospital]. ([She] had suffered from chronic nephritis for a longer period.) She had been forsaken for a younger [woman, and therefore she had been] drinking without limit for several days. After this, she had been chased away from the brothel, and only lightly dressed, she had been exposed to the cold; after which she developed uraemia [kidney failure]. (Bergh 1878, 676)[17]

Although cultural and societal ideals had been moving away from romanticism for several years (Laskar 2005), images of love as all-absorbing and potentially self-destructive remained apparent in the sources. When Westphal introduced the term "contrary sexual feeling", he illustrated it with a story of a woman who displayed "a mania for loving women" (Lybeck 2015, 9). Perhaps it is this idea of "loving mania" that is echoed in Bergh's writings.

When I read the story of the dying woman, I long for her voice (Spivak 1988; 2009) and try to fill the void by imagining (Hartman 2021) a woman who is trying to drown her sorrows in alcohol. Bergh reported that she had been drunk for several days and had been behaving in a way that the brothel found unacceptable. It is not possible to know whether she was chased away from the brothel because she was unable to work or because she caused trouble; I like to imagine it was

the latter. Regardless, she ended up on the street, in the cold January weather, which led to her illness and, subsequently, her death. I also envision a woman who, for a number of years, was subjected to poor living conditions and physically and mentally difficult working conditions. The brothels were located in some of the least developed areas of the city, with poor sanitation and limited space. Work in the brothels was brutal: Bergh noted that the women, especially "the young, generally fear brothelling [working in the brothel]". This is understandable, given that the work was characterised by "uncleanliness, lack of [being able to] independently choose the visitors [customers], and an excess of (forced) coitus" (Bergh 1886a, 926).[18] On top of that, this particular woman was suffering from nephritis, which is associated with fatigue, headache, nausea and swelling of the legs and face. She must have been in a lot of pain, making her work in the brothel miserable. Perhaps she had begun drinking as a means of self-medication. Indeed, alcoholism sent many women to the hospital (e.g., Bergh 1886b, 13; Vammen 1986, 194). As I envision it, her main joy in life was her girlfriend. Of course, I do not know this. She might have had other joys, such as friends, family, or children. But I think of her relationship with her girlfriend as one of the main things in her life that kept her afloat. I picture them having met in the brothel, the workhouse, or at the weekly gynaecological examinations. In one of the spaces, where many women were forced to gather (see also Clark 2005 for an account of how certain spaces could serve as openings for erotic encounters). I imagine their attraction to each other developing into a romantic relationship, and envision how they supported each other emotionally; how they managed tough working conditions because they had each other. Furthermore, I think her girlfriend supported her financially when she was hospitalised with nephritis. From the hospital's patients' records (*Patientprotokoller*), it appears that many hospitalised women received financial support from other women; under the patient's name, there is sometimes a small note about how this patient received money from another named woman; often this other woman would also be working in prostitution. I wonder if her girlfriend left her to be with another woman working in the same

brothel; maybe that explains why she was causing trouble in the brothel. I think she was angry, but also sad and worried about the future, as she wandered the freezing cold streets.

The drama that accompanied the women's passions led Bergh and his hospital staff to separate couples – most likely in order to prevent violence and disturbances. Bergh wrote: "It has often been necessary to separate these lovers lovers [and put them] on different floors in the hospitals, when fate has brought them in at the same time" (Bergh 1878, 676).[19] While this seems to show that the women's romantic relationships were explicit, and thus known to the world around them, it is also illustrative of the hierarchical relationship between Bergh and his patients. Two pillars of power, the police and the medical doctors, governed the system of statutory prostitution. The women were subjected to weekly gynaecological examinations and medical treatments. The doctors worked closely with the police, and many women were transferred back to the police or prisons after their treatment. While Bergh described the separation of lovers as necessary, it is also an illustration of the structural violence the women were subjected to.

Another account of outgoing dramatic and passionate behaviour concerns a younger woman, Ane M. Andersen, who was selling sex in the early 1880s:

> One of these women (Ane M. Andersen, 22 y.o. [years old]), who already tried to commit suicide two years earlier because of her female lover's infidelity, was arrested for violent behaviour towards a new unfaithful female lover. She [Ane] immediately [upon her arrest] hanged herself in the detention. (Bergh 1883, 633)[20]

While Bergh saw Ane's intimate partner violence and suicide as an example of women's potential for violence – an illustration of the passionate love that characterised the women's same-sex relationships – I interpret it as indicative of the women's grim lives. I cannot know what Ane was thinking when she hanged herself. But I know from her police file that she grew up in poverty with her single mother, and that the

police enrolled her in statutory prostitution when she was only seventeen years old. There, she worked in a harsh environment characterised by poverty and physical and sexual violence. Under these conditions, betrayal might have been the final straw, provoking suicide. I searched for Ane in various archives, thinking her death by hanging while in detention must have left archival traces. I was, however, only able to locate her burial record. It informed me that she died December 1, 1882 – one week prior to her twenty-second birthday – and that her full name was Ane Marie Andersen. Her occupation was listed as *scortum* (harlot) and, accordingly, she resided in Pilestræde (a "brothel street"). She was buried at *Vestre Kirkegaard*, a large cemetery near my house, where I often go for walks. Importantly, the burial record provided me with her full name and birthday – information that enabled me to locate her police file. However, despite my expansion of sources, I am left only with archival information about her arrests, sentences, and death, and no traces of how she experienced her situation.

Sex and carnal relationships

When I began reading the sources, I had expected Bergh to only hint at potential sexual relations; instead, I found him explicitly describing the carnal nature of the women's relationships. He wrote, for instance: "These so-called *sapphic relationships* are partly reciprocal masturbation, partly real 'sapphism' (i.e. cunnilingus [oral sex])" (Bergh 1884, 990).[21] In a different account, he got into detail about the nature of same-sex sexual acts:

> Regarding especially the woman, … In sapphism, a distinction has been made between the lingual [tongue], usually accompanied by suction, stimulation of clitoris via clitoral masturbation, either with fingers or with foreign objects. Here, one must remember that masturbation among women usually does not solely have [the] clitoris as object but at least the entire vestibulum [area around urethra and entrance to vagina] or can be vulva-vaginal. (Bergh 1886a, 844 f.)[22]

Bergh's explicit underscoring of female same-sex relations as erotic and carnal prompts reflection on previous scholarly accounts arguing that nineteenth century relationships between women were not perceived as carnal. In the Danish context, Lützen's book *Hvad hjertet begærer* [*What the heart desires*] (1986) still provides the only detailed historical study of female same-sex relations. Aligned with the tradition of women's history from the 1970s and 1980s, Lützen and her contemporaries "offered de-sexualised and politicised readings of lesbianism as a matter of emotional commitment to women and resistance to patriarchally structured personal relations" (Calhoun 2002, 61).

Vincinus (2012, 569) points to Faderman (1981) as a landmark figure when it comes to the historical understanding of romantic relationships in the nineteenth century as asexual, while Boyd has shown how lesbian feminist history dissemination of the late 1970s and early 1980s did not interpret nineteenth-century male impersonators and their relationships with women within a framework of transgenderism and sexual desires, but rather saw them as signs of patriarchy, leading to the conclusion that if male impersonators had "lived at a time when they could enjoy economic freedom, political rights, or sexual love for women *as women*, they would not choose to masquerade as men" (Boyd 1999, 75). In her book, Lützen argues that the desire of nineteenth-century women was "cultivated in accordance with the female ideal, demanding chastity, modesty, cleverness, etc., and, thus, it was most likely not carnal" (1986, 112). However, Lützen emphasises that the relationships could be meaningful and important, despite being asexual: "It would be a misrepresentation of history to view these relationships as unimportant just because they apparently were not carnal" (ibid.). While the tradition of lesbian and queer history writing has developed greatly since the 1970s and 1980s (Vicinus 2012), a limited amount of history research on lesbian/queer women* has come out of the Scandinavian context. This might explain why the argument about female same-sex relations as non-carnal has been constantly reproduced, also more recently: When Borgström and Winkvist (2018), in their book about same-sex couples in the women's movement from 1890–1960, pointed to women's shared

bedrooms as a potential sign of physical relations, they were met – in a book review in *Nordic Journal of Feminist and Gender Research* – with the counterargument that "[e]ven information about a shared bedroom does not say anything about what went on in the room" (Lützen 2021, 144).

I therefore think we need to rephrase the question of whether women did or did not have sex with each other and instead ask why Scandinavian – and perhaps especially Danish – researchers have been invested in presenting nineteenth-century women as non-sexual beings. In addition to the feminist interpretations of same-sex relations described above, the emergence of Scandinavian feminist history writing was influenced by new ideas about female sexual liberation, associated with the women's movement (1970s and 1980s) and lesbian movements (in Denmark *Lesbisk bevægelse*, founded in 1974). At the time, the break with the restrictive moral codes of the past (1950s) was fundamental to both activism and the emerging scholarly tradition of women's history; this may have narrowed the frame of interpretation, hindering an understanding of relationships between women in the nineteenth century as free and liberal. Perhaps the goal of promoting the new, anti-patriarchal sexual liberation of women produced a blindness to carnal relations between women. A recent argument for nineteenth-century women's same-sex relations being non-carnal has been the lack of sources documenting such relations: "in Denmark […] there are no sources that show anything about sexual relations between female couples" (Lützen 2021, 144). This argument echoes the traditional pledge of historians, to be faithful to the limits of written evidence (Hartman 2008); I therefore wish to use these medical sources to illustrate how nineteenth-century female same-sex relations can be imagined as carnal.

One might argue that it was the class perspective that allowed for the understanding of same-sex relations as carnal. During the nineteenth century, constructions of social class intersected with constructions of gender and sexuality.[23] A gender hierarchy, positioning women below men due to women's allegedly inferior intelligence and rationality, and class hierarchy, structured the middle and upper classes as being of higher morality and intelligence than lower classes. These hierarchies were accompanied by

behavioural rules and restrictions, reflecting the views on class and gender. The ideal of proper conduct was embodied in the middle-class male, who was expected to display rationality and behave in a civilised and culturally proper manner. Middle-class women were expected to observe sexual decency, i.e., not display sexual interest or initiative. While the same sexual ideals applied to working-class women, marginalised women from the lowest social classes were often seen as unable to follow such ideals, due to their lack of rationality and "depraved" inherited nature (Vammen 1986; Andreassen 2015). However, I hesitate to think that Bergh's framing of same-sex relations was only about class. If Bergh's interpretations of same-sex relationships depended only on class, he would likely have mentioned that middle- or upper-class women did not engage in such activities. In other words, he would have exempted higher-class women from the behaviuor he was describing. On the contrary, he wrote that same-sex relationships had always existed, and existed between young women in general, especially outside of prostitution (Bergh 1878, 676).

Perversion was not about gender

Before reading the sources, I had expected Bergh to characterize women in same-sex relationships as strange, degenerate, unnatural and fundamentally different from women in heterosexual relationships, but this was not the case. Rather, his writings gave the impression of a large number of women being engaged in same-sex relationships, the nature of which was widely known. I contribute his lack of condemnation partly to the genre of his writing, i.e., medical reports conveyed in a language of neutral observation.

It is impossible to know to which extent Bergh's views reached readers beyond the medical community, but we know of one occasion, where the newspaper *Social-Demokraten* wrote a long article about Bergh's hospital, paying significant attention to women's same-sex relationships:

> … 32 women were hospitalised with wounds or bruising from molestation. The majority of these were caused by their private male lovers, a lesser part by their, just as violent, female lovers. It might not be common

> knowledge that a large number of the public women engage in unnatural love relations with each other. In one statistic, the number of such women (Tribades) in Paris is estimated to be one-fourth of all public women. Doctor Bergh finds that this number is too low for Paris as well as for Copenhagen. (*Social-Demokraten*, Aug. 31, 1889)[24]

While the newspaper elaborated on the high number of sex workers who engaged in same-sex relationships, it seemingly saw no need to support the elaboration with the explanation that women *could be* in erotic love relationships with one other. In describing the women's relationships, the newspaper used the Danish term *elskovsforhold*. *Elskov* can be translated as love and *forhold* as relationship, and I translate *elskovsforhold* here as erotic love relations. However, the term *elskov* more specifically refers to the act of making love and literally means "lovemaking relations". Although the newspaper used the term "unnatural" in referring to the women's same-sex activities, it also depicted female same-sex relationship as being common and well-known to the wider public. Clark (2005) introduced the metaphor of "twilight moments" to capture sexual "practices that did not produce identities, that were half-understood, expressed only by oblique gestures, veiled in silence" (2005, 140). While the Copenhagen women's sexual and romantic relationships most likely did not produce identities, they seem to have been much more out in the open, commonly understood and articulated than the silenced and half-hidden practices Clark's twilight moments sought to describe. It is precisely the description of the women's same-sex relationships as common and normal that is most striking today. Indeed, the sources' framing of female same-sex relations as widely practiced and acknowledged took me by surprise. Thus, rather than illustrating twilight moments, the stories of these women call for a new imaginary of love in the late nineteenth century.

Skjoldhammer (2020) invites a similar new imagining of female same-sex activities in nineteenth-century Norway. In her analysis of Norwegian court cases against women engaging in same-sex relations in the mid-nineteenth century, she shows how female same-sex relationships

seem to have been known and accepted among local Norwegian rural communities, despite legal and religious condemnation of same-sex activities (Skjoldhammer 2020). Following Skjoldhammer's invitation, I view the stories of the women working in prostitution, and the apparent commonality and acceptance of their same-sex relationships, as a call for new understandings of love and relationships between women.

However, in a few places, Bergh did refer to women's same-sex practices as perversions, signalling a moral condemnation. In a research article about female genitals, where he described same-sex activities explicitly, he wrote:

> In both masturbation and – the not least among prostitutes widespread – sapphism, it is not the clitoris part which is stimulated, but rather the upper vestibulum and vaginal introitus; whether it is done (vicissim [mutually] or alternatim [alternately]) by using digitus [fingers] or lingua [tongue]; it is not so often that these perversions are carried out ope priapi [by assistance of a dildo] or solely by crissando et cevendo [movements of the hips]. (Bergh 1900, 1350f.)[25]

It is difficult to discern exactly what Bergh was condemning in this frame. Nowhere in the sources did Bergh write that it was morally wrong for two people of the same gender to be together sexually, but this may have seemed so obvious to Bergh that it did not need mentioning. I am inclined to employ a different interpretation and see Bergh's moral deliberation as based not solely on the gender of the women's sexual partners, but also – and perhaps even more so – on the women's sexual activity more generally. Frydenlund Larsen (2020) and Kirkebæk (2005), in their research on the confinement of girls and women at reeducational reception homes (*forsorgshjem*) in the early twentieth century, note that the girls' and women's displays of sexual desire were considered abnormal and in need of treatment. They highlight situations in which the girls and women had sought out (heterosexual) sexual activities, and show that these situations were considered especially damning and worrisome by medical doctors and lawmakers. Bergh's

descriptions of the women's same-sex activities necessarily imply that the women were initiating sex with each other, as no men were involved. It is therefore likely that it was not simply the fact that two individuals of the same gender were engaging in sexual activities that Bergh found morally wrong, but the fact that the relations involved women's acting on sexual desire. Laskar (2005, 112ff.) similarly notes that during the nineteenth century, the ability to control one's sexual desire became an ideal that was used to separate the "uncontrolled" working class from the restrained upper and middle classes.

Conclusion

Reading the medical sources today, I am surprised by how they frame female same-sex relationships as common and openly acknowledged, describing them in much the same way as heterosexual relationships. Furthermore, I am astonished by the specific examples detailing how the carnality of the relationships included the use of fingers, tongues, hips and dildos to sexually stimulate. These descriptions of sexual activity nuance and challenge prior arguments that nineteenth-century women's relations were not perceived to be sexual – an idea that has dominated much of Scandinavian (and especially Danish) research on female same-sex relationships. I attribute these medical descriptions to the genre of medical reporting, as well as to an understanding of female same-sex activities as a practice.

The sources reveal an apparent brutality and violence in the women's relationships, calling for new understandings of same-sex relationships that are less tied to the specific love experiences of middle- and upper-class women. While working-class women engaged in same-sex relationships which could be characterised by love and passion, the relationships seem also to have been marked by violence, brutality, death and disease. These women's stories are not the beautiful, vanilla love stories foundin letters and diaries; rather, they depict rough lives and dramatic relationships that sometimes ended in death. They are *grim* stories. As such, they testify to a different type of female same-sex relationship and demand that we broaden and nuance our understandings of histori-

cal same-sex relations. The stories also illustrate that looking for sources outside of letters, diaries, and literature may facilitate the inclusion of women across social classes and generate more nuanced understandings of same-sex relations.

As an archive, medical reports have limitations: they do not include the social or psychological aspects of the women's stories, and the women's voices and experiences are absent. My commitment to telling the stories of those whose lives we tend to forget – the marginalised, the poor and those who did not leave behind many traces – led me to include descriptions of what "might have been", to enable understandings of the lives behind the records. The women's stories testify to what Hartman describes as stories and lives that have "not only been overlooked, but … [have been] nearly unimaginable" (2021, xvi). I have aimed to uncover these stories via "imaginary scenarios" (Hartman 2021, 20). I believe this approach will continue to prove fruitful in uncovering the contributions of marginalised individuals to our common LGBTQ+ history.

RIKKE ANDREASSEN (she/her) is a Professor at the Department of Arts and Communication, Roskilde University, Denmark. Her research is interdisciplinary and intersectional with a strong focus on gender, sexuality and race. She is the PI of the research project New Stories of Same-Sex Relations 1880–2020, examining hitherto understudied Scandinavian archives to nuance the history of sexual minorities.

REFERENCES

Andreassen, Rikke. 2015. *Human Exhibitions: Race, Gender and Sexuality in Ethnic Displays*. Farnham: Ashgate.

Bergh, Rudolph. 1877. Beretning fra Almindelig Hospitals 2den Afdeling for 1876. *Hospitalstidende*. Copenhagen: M.P. Madsens Boghandel.

—. 1878. Beretning fra Almindelig Hospitals 2den Afdeling for 1877. *Hospitalstidende*. Copenhagen: M.P. Madsens Boghandel.

—. 1881. Beretning fra Almindelig Hospitals 2den Afdeling for 1880. *Hospitalstidende*. Copenhagen: M.P. Madsens Boghandel.

—. 1882. Beretning fra Almindelig Hospitals 2den Afdeling for 1881. *Hospitalstidende*. Copenhagen: M.P. Madsens Boghandel.

—. 1883. Beretning fra Almindelig Hospitals 2den Afdeling for 1882. *Hospitalstidende*. Copenhagen: M.P. Madsens Boghandel.
—. 1884. Beretning fra Almindelig Hospitals 2den Afdeling for 1883. *Hospitalstidende*. Copenhagen: M.P. Madsens Boghandel.
—. 1886a. Beretning fra Almindelig Hospitals 2den Afdeling for 1885. *Hospitalstidende*. Copenhagen: M.P. Madsens Boghandel.
—. 1886b. *Vestre Hospital I 1886*. Copenhagen: J.H. Schultz.
—. 1900. Symbolae ad cognitionem genitalium externorum foemineorum. *Hospitalstidende*. Copenhagen: M.P. Madsens Boghandel.
—. 1891. *Om tatoveringer hos de offentlige Fruentimmer*. Copenhagen: Cohens Bogtrykkeri.
—. 1902. *Om Tatoveringer hos Fruentimmer af den offentlige og hemmelige Prostitution*. Copenhagen: Cohens Bogtrykkeri.
Borgström, Eva & Hanna Markusson Winkvist (eds.). 2018. *Den kvinnliga tvåsamhetens frirum: Kvinnopar i kvinnorörelsen 1890–1960*. Stockholm: Appell Förlag.
Boyd, Nan Alamilla. 1999. The Materiality of Gender. *Journal of Lesbian Studies* 3(3): 73–81.
Calhoun, Cheshire. 2000. *Feminism, the Family, and the Politics of the Closet*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Clark, Anna. 2005. Twilight Moments. *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 14(1–2): 139–160.
Cvetkovich, Ann. 2003. *An Archive of Feelings: Trauma, Sexuality, and Lesbian Public Cultures*. Durham: Duke University Press.
Copenhagen Police. National Archive (*Rigsarkivet*), *Sager vedr. indskrivning af offentlige fruentimmere 1867–1906*, box 1867–1878, journal for Ane Marie Andersen.
Ehlers, Edward. 1896. *Bidrag til Diskussion af Prostitutionsspørgsmaalet*. Copenhagen: Reitzelske forlag.
Faderman, Lillian. 1981. *Surpassing the Love of Men: Romantic Friendship and Love Between Women from the Renaissance to the Present*. New York: William Morrow.
Frydendahl Larsen, Bolette. 2020. *Opdagelse og diagnosticering: Fra uopdrageligbed til psykopati på Vejstrup Pigehjem 1908–1940*. PhD diss., Lund University.
Hartman, Saidiya. 2008. Venus in Two Acts. *Small Axe* 26(12/2): 1–14.
Hartman, Saidiya. 2021. *Wayward Lives, Beautiful Experiments: Intimate Histories of Riotous Black Girls, Troublesome Women and Queer Radicals*. London: Serpent's Tail.
Kirkebæk, Birgit. 2005. Sexuality as Disability: The Women on Sprogø and Danish Society. *Scandinavian Journal of Disability Research* 7(3–4): 194–205.
Laskar, Pia. 2005. *Heterosexualitetens historia: Kön, sexualitet & njutningsmormer i sexhandböcker 1800–1920*. Falun: Modernista.
Lybeck, Marti. 2014. *Desiring Emancipation: New Women and Homosexuality in Germany 1890–1933*. New York: State University of New York Press.

Lützen, Karin. 1986. *Hvad hjertet begærer: Kvinders kærlighed til kvinder, 1825–1985*. Copenhagen: Tiderne Skifter.

Lützen, Karin. 2021. Den kvinnliga tvåsamhetens frirum: Kvinnopar i kvinnorörelsen 1890–1960. *NORA – Nordic Journal of Feminist and Gender Research* 29(2): 144–146.

Maldonado-Torres, Nelson. 2007. On the Coloniality of Being. *Cultural Studies* 21(2–3): 240–270.

Nyegaard, Niels. 2018. *Perverse forbrydere og gode borgere: Homoseksualitet, heteronormativitet og medborgerskab i Københavns offentlighed, 1906–11*. PhD diss., University of Aarhus.

Parent-Duchatelet, A.-J.-R. 1836. *De la prostitution dans la ville de Paris, considérée sous le rapport de l'hygiène publique, de la morale et de l'administration*. Paris: Bailliere et fils.

Patientprotokoller A-D. 1887–1903. Rudolf Bergh's hospital, Copenhagen Municipality Archive.

Pedersen, Merete Bøge. 2000. *Den reglementerede prostitution i København fra 1874 til 1906*. Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum.

Quijano, Anibal. 2000. Coloniality of Power and Eurocentrism in Latin America. *International Sociology* 15: 215–232.

Rydström, Jens. 2007. Introduction: Same-Sex Sexuality and the Law in Scandinavia 1842–1999. In: *Criminally Queer: Homosexuality and Criminal Law in Scandinavia, 1842–1999*, edited by Jens Rydström & Kati Mustola (13–40). Amsterdam: Aksant.

Rupp, Laila. 2009. *Sapphistries: A Global History of Love Between Women*. New York: New York University Press.

Skjoldhammer, Tonja. 2020. Forargeligt, uteerligt forhold: Omgjengelse mot nature og seksuell omgang mellom kvinder. *Historisk Tidsskrift* 99: 286–300.

Smith-Rosenberg, Carroll. 1975. The Female World of Love and Ritual. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 1(1): 1–29.

Social-Demokraten. 1889. Vestre Hospital. August 31.

Spivak, Gayatri C. 1988. Can the Subaltern Speak? In: *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, edited by Cary Nelson & Lawrence Grossberg (271–313). London: Macmillan Education.

Spivak, Gayatri C. 2009. Interviewed by Oscar Guardiola-Rivera. *Naked Punch*, August 28.

Vammen, Tinne. 1986. *Rent og urent: Hovedstadens piger og fruer 1880–1920*. Copenhagen: Gyldendal.

Vincinus, Martha. 2013. The History of Lesbian History. *Feminist Studies* 38(3), 566-596.

NOTES

1. Rydström's wording is from Smith-Rosenberg's article "The Female World of Love and Ritual" (1975).
2. I use the terms "sex workers" and "women selling sex" to describe the women engaged in sex work under the statutory prostitution system. While I do not employ the term "prostitutes" (except in citations), as that term is considered derogatory, I do frame sex workers as women working "*in* prostitution". I do so to underscore how the statutory prostitution functioned as a strictly controlled system, which sex workers were forced to comply with. While the term "sex workers" might be associated with agency and working liberty, the statutory prostitution was accompanied with force and removal of basic rights; thus, the phrasing "working in prostitution".
3. All citations are of my own translation, from Danish to English. I use modern spelling in my translations and provide the original text in an endnote. Original text: "Som ellers [dvs. som sædvanlig] har et forholdsviis stort Procentantal (gjemmensnitsviis omtrent 14 pCt. [procent]) af Skjøgernes Masse altid befundet sig i Hospitalet. … Antal[let] af Skjøger (429-471) har saaledes dog i Løbet af Aaret kunne afgive 1523 … [Indlæggelser] af i alt 426 forskellige Fruentimmer" (Bergh 1886b, 585).
4. Original text: "Den saa uheldige Lov af 10. April 1874 (§ 4) sender en Mængde ganske unge Individer paa Tvangshuset, hvor de henligger i høist utilstrækkeligt Tilsyn, mindre fordærvede mellem høist depraverede, hvor de lære Amor lesbicus o.a. [og anden] Umoralitet [at kende]" (Bergh 1902, 5).
5. Original text: "… mistænkt for at føre et løsagtigt Levnet".
6. Original text: "den ikke mindst mellem de Prostituerede udbredte Sapphisme…" (Bergh 1900, 1350); "… disse sapphistiske Forhold [er mellem prostituerede] overhovedet neppe … sjeldne" (Bergh 1883, 633).
7. Original text: "Det hænder oftere, at et saadant Fruentimmer, fordetmeste den ældste af de to, betaler en Bordelværtinde for at kunne tilbringe Natten med sin Elskede" (Bergh 1878, 676).
8. Original text: "Indbyrdes Kjærlighedsforbindelser mellem de offentlige Fruentimmer forekomme (som mellem unge Kvinder i det Hele) ikke sjeldent … De sapphistiske Forhold have existeret siden Oldtiden og oftest maaske udenfor Prostitution" (Bergh 1878, 676).
9. Original text: "henimod ¼ af de offentlige Fruentimmere i Paris [var] Tribader"; Bergh tilføjede: "hvad vel baade for Paris og Kjøbenhavns Vedkommende ikke er altfor højt anslaaet" (Bergh 1891; 12). Parent-Duchatelet is cited after Bergh.
10. Original text: "Parent-Duchatelet … anslaar Antallet af de Prostituerede i Paris, som driver Sapphisme eller gensidig Menustupration [masturbation] til ¼ af del hele Antal; maaske er Tallet her noget lavere" (Bergh 1886b, 14).

11. Original text: "blevne en Slags Perversitetsakademier for Amor lesbicus, Sadisme, ja endogsaa for Sodomi, saa at de ikke længere svare til det oprindelige Formaal" (Ehlers 1896, 48).
12. Original text: "pseudoveneriske Affectioner" (Bergh 1877, 573).
13. Original text: "Elsker eller Elskerinde" (Bergh 1881, 712).
14. Original text: "Disse Beskadigelser [som forårsagede indlæggelse] hidrørte for en stor eller endog for største Delen fra disse (66 [indlagte]) Individers Elskere eller (ofte ligesaa voldsomme) Elskerinder" (Bergh 1883, 633). See also: Bergh 1882, 693; Bergh 1882, 69; Bergh 1884, 990; Bergh 1884, 990; 1885, 948.
15. Original text: "Fem Individer indlagdes med betydelige Contusion [kvæstelse] af Orbitalregionen [øjen-området] eller af Overlæben, Følge af Slag, hos de fire af deres Kjærster, hos det femte af hendes Elskerinde, som var skinsyg paa hendes vaagnede Tilbøjelighed for en yngre Skøge ([indlagt] 25 Dage)" (Bergh 1877, 573).
16. Original text: "Enhver offentlig Kvinde, der ikke er forfalden til Amor Lesbicus er i Alfonsens Kløer" (Ehlers 1896: 62).
17. Original text: "Der udvikler sig i disse Forhold undertiden en utrolig Lidenskab og Jalousie. Fornyligt (Jan. 1878) indbragtes et saadant Individ (som længe have lidt af Chronisk Nephrit [nyrebetændelse]) døende i Hospitalet; hun havde efter at være forskudt for en Yngre drukket over alle Grændser i flere Dage, var derefter blevet bortjaget fra Bordellet og tyndt paaklædt udsat for Kulde, hvorefter der udviklede sig Uraemi [udtalt nyresvigt]" (Bergh 1878, 676).
18. Original text: "den især af de unge i Reglen saa frygtede Bordellering"; "Ureenlighed, af Mangel paa selvstændigt Valg af Besøgende og af (paatvungne Samleie") (both citations from Bergh 1886a, 926).
19. Original text: "Det har oftere været nødvendigt at sondre disse Elskende i forskjellige Etager i Hospitalet, naar Tilfældet har ført dem derind paa samme Tid" (Bergh 1878, 676).
20. Original text: "Et af disse Fruentimmer (Ane M. Andersen, 22 A.g), som allerede for 2 Aar siden paa Gund af sin Venindes Utroskab havde gjort Selvmordsforsøg, blev paa Grund af voldelig Adfærd ligeoverfor en ny utro Elskerinde arresteret og hængte sig straks derefter" (Bergh 1883, 633).
21. Original text: "Disse saakaldte *sapphistiske Forhold* ere deels gjensidig Masturbation, deels virkelig 'Sapphisme' (ɔ: Cunnilinctus) [dvs. oralsex]" (Bergh 1884, 990; italics in original).
22. Original text: "Hvad særligt Kvinden angaaer … [så har man i] *Sapphisme* sondret den *lingvale*, sædvaneligviis af Suction ledsagede, *Irritation af Clitoris* fra den *clitoriske Masturbation* med Fingrene eller fremmede Legemer, hvorved dog maa erindres, at Manusuprationen hos Kvinder sædvanligvis ikke alene har Clitoris, men idetmindste hele Vestibulum [området omkring skedeindgang og urinrøret] til Object eller er vulvo-vaginalt" (Bergh 1886a, 844 f.).

See also: "Baade Mastruprationen [masturbation] og ved den ikke mindst mellem de Prostituerede udbredte Sapphisme er det heller ikke Clitoris-Partiet, som titilleres [stimuleres], men netop det øvre Vestibulum [området omkring skedeindgang og urinrør] og Introitus vaginae [skedeindgangen], hvad enten nu hertil (vicissim [gensidigt] eller alternatim [skiftevist]) benyttes digitus [fingre] eller lingua [tunge]; det er jo sjeldnere at disse Perversiteter pleies ope priapi [ved hjælpe af en dildo] eller alene crissando et cevendo [hoftebevægelser]" (Bergh 1900, 1350 f.).

23. Constructions of race and racial hierarchies also played an important role in constructions of sexuality.
24. Original text: "32 Kvinder indkom [til hospitalet] med Saar eller Mærker af Mishandling. De hidrørte for Størstedelen fra deres private Elsker, sjældnere fra deres oftlige saa voldsomme Elskerinder. Det er maaske ikke mange bekendt, at en stor Del af de offentlige Fruentimmer staar i unaturligt Elskovs-Forhold til hinanden. I en Statistik anslaas Antallet af saadanne Fruentimmer (Tribader) i Paris til en Fjerdedel af samtlige offenlige Kvinder; Dr. Bergh mener, at dette Antal baade for Paris' og Københavns Vedkommende er for lavt" (*Social-Demokraten* Aug. 31, 1889).
25. Original text: "Baade Mastruprationen [masturbation] og ved den ikke mindst mellem de Prostituerede udbredte Sapphisme er det heller ikke Clitoris-Partiet, som titilleres [stimuleres], men netop det øvre Vestibulum [området omkring skedeindgang og urinrør] og Introitus vaginae [skedeindgangen], hvad enten nu hertil (vicissim [gensidigt] eller alternatim [skiftevist]) benyttes digitus [fingre] eller lingua [tunge]; det er jo sjeldnere at disse Perversiteter pleies ope priapi [ved hjælpe af en dildo] eller alene crissando et cevendo [hoftebevægelser; Crissando et cevendo henviser til 'sexede' hoftebevægelser, dvs. hoftebevægelser som under samleje]" (Bergh 1900, 1350 f.).