The Classics were core to the curriculum and ethos of the intensely homosocial Victorian and Edwardian public schools. Yet ancient homosexuality and erotic pedagogy were problematic to the educational establishment, which expurgated classical texts with sexual content. This volume analyses the intimate nexus between the Classics, sex, and education primarily through the figure of the schoolmaster Philip Gillespie Bainbrigge (1890–1918), whose clandestine writings explore homoerotic desires and comment on classical education. It reprints Bainbrigge’s surviving works: Achilles in Scyros (a verse drama featuring a cross-dressing Achilles and a Chorus of lesbian schoolgirls) and a Latin dialogue between schoolboys (with a translation by Jennifer Ingleheart). Like other similarly educated men of his era, Bainbrigge used Latin as an intimate homoerotic language; after reading Bainbrigge’s dialogue, A. E. Housman went on to write a scholarly article in Latin about ancient sexuality, Praefanda. This volume, therefore, also examines the parallel of Housman’s Praefanda, its knowing Latin, and bold challenge to mainstream morality. Bainbrigge’s works show the queer potential of Classics. His underground writings owe more to a sexualized Rome than an idealized Greece, offering a provocation to the study of Classical Reception and the history of sexuality. Bainbrigge refuses to apologize for homoerotic desire, celebrates the pleasures of sex, and disrupts mainstream ideas about the Classics and the relationship between ancient and modern. As this volume demonstrates, Rome is central to Queer Classics: it provided a male elite with a liberating erotic language, and offers a variety of models for same-sex desire.
Conclusion
Jennifer Ingleheart

in Masculine Plural: Queer Classics, Sex, and Education

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The conclusion explores the wider implications of the argument of this book, and of the study of Bainbriggean classicism, or Queer Classics. The most queer Classical Receptions look to Rome for a range of transgressive models of sexual desire and pleasure, rather than turning to Greece to apologize for same-sex love. In private writings, Bainbrigge and others are free to focus on sex and its role in the ancient and modern worlds. Queer classicists are fascinated by the body—the ancient body and the pleasures it experienced, as well as the modern embodiment of classical education. Queer classicists remind us that the body and sexuality cannot be separated from the study of Classics—an important insight for a discipline in which expurgation of (homo)sexual material in classical texts at school is still all too common.

Mahaffy and Wilde
Alastair J. L. Blanshard

in Oscar Wilde and Classical Antiquity

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This chapter explores the relationship between Wilde and his Trinity College Classics tutor, John Pentland Mahaffy. This complex relationship played a vital part in the formation of Wilde’s distinctive version of Hellenism. It was a troubled relationship. Wilde and Mahaffy disagreed about politics, sexuality, religion, the course of Greek history, and the role and function of classical education. Examining these points of disagreement brings into clear relief a number of important contours in Wilde’s attitudes to the Greeks. Mahaffy, through his life and writing, provoked Wilde into defining precisely what the Greeks meant to Wilde, how they might be studied, and their value to contemporary society.
Introduction
Jennifer Ingleheart

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The little-known figure of Philip Gillespie Bainbrigge is introduced to the reader, and his clandestine writings and importance for the history of sexuality and Classical Reception are outlined. A brief biography sketches Bainbrigge’s education at Eton and Cambridge, his many homosexual friends, and his career as a schoolmaster at Shrewsbury. The Introduction examines his participation in a secretive culture in which men shared private homoerotic writings with each other. It examines Bainbrigge’s wartime friendship with Wilfred Owen, and his own war poetry, in the context of scholarship on homoeroticism and First World War poetry. It lays out the way in which classical education and the history of sexuality are intimately linked, exploring the institutionalization of the Classics in public schools, attempts to censor ancient sexuality, and sex education.

In Decent Latin
Jennifer Ingleheart

in Masculine Plural: Queer Classics, Sex, and Education
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This chapter analyses Bainbrigge’s Latin dialogue between two schoolboys, in which an older boy introduces the younger to the pleasures of sex. It explores Bainbrigge’s treatment of sex in the light of much less sexually frank contemporary examples of clandestine homoerotic writing (including E. M. Forster’s Maurice), and argues that Latin was crucial in allowing Bainbrigge to discuss homoerotic desires and acts in a frank, yet still coded manner. It explores parallel examples of Latin’s use as a homoerotic language and interrogates how Bainbrigge’s sexual vocabulary draws on classical Latin as well as a longer tradition of neo-Latin pornographic works. The chapter’s conclusion explores the queer temporality of Bainbrigge’s hybrid classical/modern world and his parody of erotic pedagogy. It also analyses Bainbrigge’s comments on the censorship of sex in the classical schoolroom, and on classical education more broadly.
Chapter 1, ‘Only with Beauty Man Shall Play. Goethe’s Production of Ion in Weimar (1802)’, proceeds from Goethe’s and Schiller’s responses to the French Revolution. While Goethe hailed the Bildung of the individual—that is, the development of his potential to the full—as the substitute for a revolution, Schiller believed that it was the aesthetic education of the individual that would finally result in a free state. The production of a Greek tragedy as an autonomous work of art that precluded the formation of empathy in the spectator (contrary to the domestic tragedy) was supposed to offer the spectator the possibility of aesthetic distance and thus enable him to acquire Bildung. To this end, Goethe developed a completely new aesthetics that the majority of spectators rejected—Ion turned out to be a flop.

This chapter surveys the history of classical Greek drama productions at the Department of Theatre Arts of Tel Aviv University as the basis for an exploration of the issue of theatre and art education. By analysing the students’ approach to classical Greek drama, we can see how they deal with the interpretative reading, translation, and performance of such texts on stage. We also see how the ancient works invite the students to delve more deeply into their distinctive content and forms; to draw links between theory and practice, and between text and context; to gain a deeper understanding of the issues of style and styling; and to engage in a richer experimentation with various aspects of stage performance—such as pronunciation, diction, voice, movement, music, and mise-en-scène.
Chapter 3 focuses on the listener’s experience. As a mass medium, BBC Radio made the stories, histories, and ideas of ancient Greece practically accessible to a huge audience that was extremely diverse in terms of educational and cultural experience and demographic and geographical spread. English translations of ancient texts were adapted to the dramatic conventions and possibilities of radio and each programme was accompanied by useful paratexts, such as illustrated Radio Times articles. As a distinctively exploratory and imaginatively stimulating medium for the presentation of established cultural works in storytelling forms, BBC Radio also made ancient Greece imaginatively accessible to listeners in a vital and powerful way. Thus, as the evidence shows, listeners from a wide range of backgrounds engaged on their own terms with radio representations of the ancient world which were intended to be culturally informative, educationally enriching, and imaginatively stimulating.