

"berad", in Digest urth.v013.n001

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 08 Jun 1998

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John Bishop — 08 Jun 1998, 10:21

Woody Allen uses the term as well, in a context implying that it's an old, old term, and not specifically gay.

In that film, Allen is a "beard" when he is the escort for a mobster's mistress (thus allowing the mistress to have an reason for being at a place where the mobster will be, without appearing to be there with the mobster).

The practice is ancient; it was an old idea in Elizabethan times, when kings would have their mistresses marry a presentable non-entity. The "husband" would be rewarded with lands, but it was strictly hands-off (until the king tired of her...). See the film "Restoration" for a plot based on this practice.

-John