

# The World of Homosexuals

Homosexuality is as old as humanity and despite such studies as the Kinsey Report which reveals that one in every six persons has homosexual tendencies, the revulsion and prejudice against it still persist.

This book is a sympathetic investigation of the world of the gay. Containing personal interviews with homosexuals in India and abroad it touches upon many aspects of the subject, and makes an impassioned plea for a more humane and compassionate, as well as rational, scrutiny of its unique social and psychological repercussions.

Shakuntala Devi is known the world over as a mathematical wizard, and has the distinction of having beaten the world's most sophisticated computer by six seconds. She is currently at work on a book on lesbians.

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# The World of Homosexuals



Shakuntala Devi



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THE WORLD OF HOMOSEXUALS

### **Shakuntala Devi**

The World of Homosexuality

शकुन्तला देवी

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## Preface

Sexual topics of any kind are avoided in polite conversation in India, and any talk concerning homosexuality is altogether taboo. Homosexuality is basically as old as humanity, but what is comparatively new, and urgent, is the need for contemporary society to come to terms in its thinking and its law making, both with psychological knowledge and human behaviour.

Ideas are changing. Works on subjects that were taboo in the past, such as marital adjustments and birth control, now circulate freely. However, the horror and prejudice towards homosexuality lingers on. By virtue of the fact that it is seldom discussed or written about, ignorance and emotionalism still abound, and homosexuality in our society today is surrounded by a haze of myth, the general attitude of society varying from an almost superstitious dread, through abhorrence and contempt to an amused and prurient fascination.

Owing to strongly held opinions on the subject, unfortunately serious medical and sociological investigations on this subject in India are almost nil, considering the importance of the question in human terms. However, in the West, where they are more willing to look problems in the eye, there has been a great flood of material written on the subject over the past few decades. Western writers, it is seen clearly, have taken two markedly different approaches towards the subject of homosexuality. The first approach has been exclusively personal and biographic, found mainly in novels and confessionals. Homosexuals wrote about themselves in very personal terms, usually in heavy tones of guilt and self-hatred. A good example of this type of writing would be Donald Webster Cory's *The Homosexual in America* written in 1951. In this kind of writing the author, himself or herself a homosexual, endeavours to give an insight into how it feels to be a homosexual.

The second approach is that of social scientists, psychologists and psychiatrists aiming to give a descriptive and analytic viewing of

homosexuality from the point of an outsider. I belong to neither category of authors. I am neither a homosexual nor a social scientist, psychologist or a psychiatrist. My only qualification for writing this book is that I am a human being. And I wish to write about a group, a minority group, of my fellow human beings who have been very little understood, and forced to live in "half-hiding" throughout their lives, by a society that is merciless towards everything that differs from the statistical norm. In other words, I wish to say that this is not a book written by an expert for experts. It is the work of a lay person for lay people. It is the ordinary person's view of a problem which confronts ordinary men and women all over the world.

Perhaps I shall be labelled a heterosexual writer embarking on a voyeuristic tour of the homosexual world. But such is not my intention. I do, however, agree that the best social analysis grows out of personal experience, but then experience without analysis is equally insufficient. During my travels round the world, everywhere I have found that human problems arise more out of ignorance and prejudice on sexual matters than from any other cause. Therefore I set out to write this book.

Since I began to write the book, two years ago, I have talked with experts, psychologists, social scientists, social workers, politicians, priests, doctors, lawyers, professors and many homosexuals in India as well as in Canada, West Germany, the U.K. and many other countries. I have read numerous books, pamphlets, departmental reports, parliamentary debates and even blue books, on the subject. This book is a result of these investigations.

Through this book I hope the long silence of conspiracy on the subject is broken and some serious social and psychological questions are brought out into the arena of rational scrutiny.

SHAKUNTALA DEVI

## Acknowledgement

Many have contributed to the making of this book. I could not have written this book without the cooperation of many experts, both eminent theoreticians and practical workers in the field, in India as well as abroad. I was helped by many behavioural scientists, theoreticians, and therapists and among them I owe a great debt to Dr Bill Morrison, Department of Sociology, University of Winnipeg; Anne Percival, Lecturer in Sociology, University of Winnipeg; Mrs Vanaja Dhruvaraj, Lecturer in Sociology, University of Winnipeg; Dr Edward Moulten, Professor of History, University of Manitoba, and to many mental health workers and social workers in the USA, West Germany, Canada, and India.

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I am specially grateful to the staff members of the British Museum in London who accorded me continuous access to research sources, and to the Librarian and the staff members of the National Library in Calcutta.

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*Prejudice is a despotic, ignorant, mental slaveholder. It prejudices and pronounces sentences without evidence, judge or jury. We ought to run away from it, for it is a false witness, stupid, dishonest and short-sighted. It separates friends, impedes human progress, befriends bad institutions, obstructs good causes, perpetuates the enslavement of body and mind, and wars against the best interests of mankind.*

ERNEST HEMINGWAY

## The Case of Venkata Subramaniam

*Venkata Subramaniam is a senior executive of a well-known company with international collaboration in Bangalore. He belongs to an orthodox Brahmin family of Tamil Nadu. At his request, his actual name is withheld.*

*S.D.* When did you first realize you were a homosexual?

*V.S.* I really became aware of being a homosexual at high school.

*S.D.* Where was this school, by the way?

*V.S.* In Kumbakonam.

*S.D.* How did you become aware of your sexuality?

*V.S.* Well, to be frank with you I'd not even heard the word 'homosexual' then. I was very young—must have been about 14 or 15. I was aware that I wasn't attracted to girls. In fact... I don't know if I should be frank... after all you're a woman and you may feel offended.

*S.D.* Certainly not! Please forget that I'm a woman. Why is gender so important? Just think of me as a person.

*V.S.* Women repulse me. The very thought of any intimate contact with a woman makes me feel sick.

*S.D.* I see!

*V.S.* While I was at school, most of my classmates were boys. It was a co-educational school you see. There were only about 10 girls in the class. They sat together by themselves in the front benches. They never mixed with us, in fact they seldom spoke to us. Most of the time they used to chat among themselves and giggle a lot. Some of the boys in the class used to tease them and pass remarks, sometimes obscene remarks at them. At that time I'd feel sorry for them. And some of the boys used to be infatuated by certain girls, though they never exchanged a word with them, and these boys would weave all kinds of fantastic stories about them. They would imagine

themselves making love to one of these girls, and they used to tell me about the immense feelings of romance that used to be aroused in them at the mere sight of them. But no such thing happened to me. The girls left me absolutely cold. If at all, I pitied them.

*S.D.* Pitied them? What for?

*V.S.* For the good things that were denied to them in life. For instance they didn't play games after school like us boys, as they more or less confined themselves to their seats on the benches during class hours, and after school they went straight home—in a group. Well, there were so many other privileges which we enjoyed that they didn't. They seemed so weak and helpless. And I admired strength, courage and all the other qualities that went with it. I simply couldn't imagine myself making love to one of the girls.

*S.D.* As you grew older, were you able to get over your repulsion towards girls, at least to some extent?

*V.S.* No. On the other hand my repulsion for them was aggravated. In fact at a stage I began to think of women as very dirty creatures.

*S.D.* My goodness! Why?

*V.S.* Well, you know what happens in the orthodox Brahmin families in the South. Every month, about three days, my grandmother used to make my mother sit in a secluded corner. She wasn't allowed to touch anything in the house. I and my sisters weren't allowed to go near her. If we cried for her, when we were small, Grandma would grudgingly take off our clothes and then only could we go to mother. Mother had to sleep on a tattered mat and eat by herself in the corner, after we'd all eaten. She wasn't allowed to go out with my father or even speak to him. I used to wonder why. I asked Grandma about it one day and she said that mother was unclean and impure during these days.

I don't know what happened, but from then onwards I could only think of women as unclean, impure people, and I simply couldn't bring myself to think of any physical contact with them. Naturally I became a loner, and spent most of my time studying and taking long walks. I got excellent marks at school, in fact I always stood first in class. Most of the boys in the class admired me and often approached me to help them with their lessons.

*S.D.* When did you actually have your first homosexual experience.

*V.S.* When I was in the final year at High School. There was this boy, also a Brahmin, who was a kind of a football hero. He was tall, well-built and had an excellent physique. But he was poor at his studies. As the final exams were approaching, he'd become panicky. He begged of me to help him with his geography lessons. I agreed and invited him to my house in the evening, and he came with his books. In the evenings my sisters used to have their music lessons, so the harmonium was blaring from the hallway. I decided to lock my room from inside. We were doing the lessons and suddenly I felt Seenu's hand caressing me. I did not protest. Somehow I liked it. Seenu had a powerful personality and a strong will. Everything happened so quickly that when my mother knocked on the door with coffee for both of us, we'd completely composed ourselves and were back at our lessons. Mother, of course, remarked that I was looking a bit tired, but she left us alone and went away.

After that first day, we met every day in the evening to do our 'lessons'. We'd start the evening with the act and later begin our studies. My whole life changed. Besides being a sexual partner, Seenu was a true friend to me. A type of a relationship grew between us that cannot be explained. We came to be dependant on each other.

*S.D.* Did your mother or father suspect anything?

*V.S.* No. They were proud that I spent so much time at my studies, and by the way Seenu didn't belong to Kumbakonam. He was originally from Pudukkottai. His parents were still in Pudukkottai. They weren't well off and they had nine other children. So they'd sent him to Kumbakonam to stay with his uncle and aunt, who were childless, and therefore they could spend well on his education.

*S.D.* I see.

*V.S.* After the final exams he went back to his parents to Pudukkottai and I was miserable. We both had done well in our exams. I stood first in the school and Seenu got a First Class. His aunt came to my place and thanked me over and over again for the good influence I had over Seenu and gave me the entire credit for his passing in the First Class. She told mother that she would like to send Seenu to the same college as myself. I got admission in one of the best colleges in Madras, and Seenu's uncle and aunt arranged to send him to the same college. We stayed in the hostel and shared a room. No one suspected anything. . . we were both very happy. But the inevitable day came. We both got our degrees and had to leave college. Seenu



went back to Kumbakonam to settle down there with his uncle to look after his land and his business, and he was compelled to get married by his uncle and aunt to a first cousin.

*S.D.* That must have been terrible for you.

*V.S.* Yes, I suffered a lot in the beginning. I simply couldn't bear the idea of Seenu with another person—that too a woman. The very thought sent shivers through my body. I reached such a level of despondency that I even considered suicide. I tried to see him, but he wouldn't see me. I wrote to him several letters, but he didn't reply to even one. . . in fact in the later stages, he started sending them back to me unopened. He cut himself off from me completely.

*S.D.* Did you never run into him, even by accident in Kumbakonam.

*V.S.* No. After I got my degree I got this job here in Bangalore, of course in a very junior position. I was lucky. I got quick promotions and got to where I am today.

*S.D.* I don't think I agree with you entirely that you got to where you are today only by luck. Your colleagues tell me that you're a brilliant person, and very hardworking too.

*V.S.* They're being kind. Anyway after I moved to Bangalore, my family moved from Kumbakonam. My father retired from service and now my family lives in Madurai in our ancestral home.

*S.D.* Is Seenu happily married? Has he any children?

*V.S.* I don't know. I've no contact with him at all, as I told you earlier.

*S.D.* How do you feel now? How have you been able to adjust yourself to life generally?

*V.S.* For a long time I was unhappy. I always felt depressed and lost. I'd lived together with Seenu for nearly four years. During my relationship with him I never went with another person. I hardly ever looked at anyone else. We were always together and we used to be very possessive of each other. It was a secure situation for me, but after I lost him, life became meaningless.

*S.D.* Did you ever fight with each other when you lived together?

*V.S.* Yes, sometimes. . . we'd have a big fight and I'd threaten to leave him, but he would literally drag me back and make me sit down. He would pacify me. In the beginning of our relationship we fought a lot. After about a year of fighting and throwing things, we really settled down. We didn't fight much after that.

*S.D.* When you were involved in your relationship with Seenu did you realize at that time what sort of a relationship you were involved in?

*V.S.* Yes. In the later stages. When we first started we didn't know the name for it. We didn't even know that there were millions of others in the world who were like us. We only knew that we made each other happy and that's what counted most.

*S.D.* Did you feel guilty?

*V.S.* No. Not till we found out that what we were doing had an actual name for it and that if we were caught we'd be punished by law.

*S.D.* Did it deter you from continuing that kind of relationship?

*V.S.* Not at all. To be frank with you, in a way it made the whole thing more interesting for us. . . you know, the feeling that we were doing something that was a criminal offence, but we tried to be very careful.

*S.D.* And finally how did you manage to make a life of your own without Seenu?

*V.S.* I gradually accepted the fact that I simply had to learn to live without him. I got involved in a couple of other relationships—nothing too deep—because by now I knew that a monogamous relationship in the homosexual world is so difficult.

*S.D.* What is your situation at present?

*V.S.* I have a steady friend now, right here in Bangalore. He holds a junior position in a public sector undertaking. Of course he's much younger than I, but we get along very well. We meet almost every other day, sometimes even every day, mostly at my house because there's more privacy in my place. He belongs to a joint family—there are twenty other members in his house.

*S.D.* Are you quite happy now?

*V.S.* Well, I should imagine so.

*S.D.* How do you feel about children?

*V.S.* I love children and I think that it would be beautiful to bring them up. . . pity Mohan can't conceive!

*S.D.* Pardon me for being so direct, but you're such a handsome man. Lots of young girls must be losing their hearts to you. How exactly do you tackle them?

*V.S.* That's always been a problem you know. The girls think that I look like Rock Hudson!

*S.D.* I think so too. You certainly do! In fact I wanted to say so myself but I didn't want to be so forward. Just like Rock Hudson—same height, same build, and good God, for an Indian you're so fair! I could have sworn that one of your parents was a foreigner.

*V.S.* Certainly not. Both my parents are South Indian Brahmins, as orthodox as they come.

*S.D.* If only things were different you would've fetched the highest dowry in the marriage market, I bet!

*V.S.* Well, you've won the bet, because I've fetched a very good dowry perhaps one of the highest in my community.

*S.D.* What do you mean?

*V.S.* I've been on the marriage market for the last two years and I'm going to be married next month. My parents are very hard bargainers you know. They've struck the best deal, particularly Mother. She's a great bargainer, starting from brinjals and onions up to a matrimonial dowry. She has wangled out quite a lot—diamond earrings, diamond necklace, a Fiat, silver utensils, lots of cash—and she expects to squeeze more out of them just before the marriage, at the eleventh hour—you know the old trick.

*S.D.* But really, you're not serious about getting married, are you?

*V.S.* I am. I'm going to be married. The reception is in the Lalbagh. I hope you'll be in town. You must come.

*S.D.* Now look. . . I just don't understand. . .

*V.S.* There's nothing to understand really. I'm 30 now, and my parents have been after me to get married for the last six years. They started getting horoscopes from girls' parents almost from the time I left college. And after all I've a duty towards my family.

*S.D.* How do you expect to make a success of your marriage?

*V.S.* Look now, you're talking like a foreigner. What's success in marriage in India anyway? It's only a commercial arrangement. No question of any love or companionship. All that's expected is mere conformity. . . that there'll be in my marriage, rest assured.

*S.D.* But still the whole thing sounds so cruel to me—to marry a girl, knowing very well that you can't make her happy.

*V.S.* Who said I can't make her happy? I agree I can't make love to her, but why should she expect romance in an arranged marriage? After all, her father is technically purchasing a bridegroom from the marriage bazar, and they'll get their money's worth. The entire city

is going to admire her father for having been able to find such a fine match for his daughter. Social image. That's what they want isn't it? And they'll get it. After all they're paying for it. He can very well afford it. He's a millionaire.

*S.D.* But Mr Venkata Subramaniam, I still wonder what will happen to the girl when she finds out. God! The poor girl is being victimized by everybody, isn't she?

*V.S.* I don't agree with you. Indian marriage is pot-luck. She gets what she's destined to get. And I'm taking the same chances aren't I? Just imagine, I could've been what you would call a normal person and she could've very well been a lesbian. In fact she may still be one. I don't know.

*S.D.* I hope she is. . . for her own sake.

*V.S.* Well, what does society expect of marriage in this country. . . stability. There'll be plenty and plenty of stability, because whatever may be the case I wouldn't dream of leaving her. After all, I have to think of my family name. I've three younger sisters to be married. And of course my wife would have no way of leaving me, therefore ours will be a very successful marriage.

*S.D.* What do you expect to get out of this, personally?

*V.S.* Nothing, absolutely nothing.

*S.D.* Money?

*V.S.* No. The money goes to my parents. They'd spend it on the marriages of my sisters.

*S.D.* Then why do you want to get involved in this.

*V.S.* To make everyone around me happy. My parents are made happy because they get plenty of money to celebrate the marriages of their daughters. It would have been very difficult for them otherwise, and of course there'll be more to come in the future. My future father-in-law is happy because he found an excellent son-in-law, so well-placed. And the girl. . . I haven't even seen her. I only know that her horoscope tallies with mine perfectly. She's going to be happy because she gets a husband, home, and lots of social prestige. So everyone is going to be happy.

*S.D.* And you?

*V.S.* I've the satisfaction that I've made everyone happy.

*S.D.* By this marriage do you hope to be weaned away into a heterosexual way of life.

*V.S.* No, certainly not. I'm very happy with Mohan. My sexual

tendencies are decided. Nothing can change them. If I fall out with Mohan, there'll always be someone else to take his place. No problem there.

*S.D.* Pardon me for putting it this way, but the whole thing seems so cruel to me. . .very cruel indeed!

*V.S.* Cruelty! If you want to see real cruelty, look out of the window. You're not blind. Tell me, what do you see there? Two bullocks pulling a cart. The load is so heavy they're pulling it with great effort. The man is whipping them severely. Their skin is lacerated. They're bleeding. Isn't that cruelty?

*S.D.* That's one kind of cruelty.

*V.S.* There are millions in the country dying without food, during rains they've no roof over their heads, new-born babies die of lack of nourishment and care. Invalids have no medical help, and we're sitting here in an air-conditioned room sipping cream coffee. Isn't this cruelty? And if I don't go through with this marriage, my three sisters will remain unmarried. My father simply can't afford to get them married, not with his paltry pension. And I'm the only son. The girls aren't very educated. They can't go to work. My father and mother spent all their money on my education. They couldn't afford to educate my sisters also. Not on the salary of a Government servant. . .with me in the hostel in Madras. . .what a lot they had to spend on me. The things they denied themselves, the sacrifices they had to make, and the humiliations they had to suffer when they had to borrow money from relatives to pay for my books. I can't let them down now.

*S.D.* I see...but still. . .

*V.S.* There's nothing more to be said on the subject as far as I'm concerned. Our very existence is full of cruelty. When you breathe you inhale germs. You smother them. When you walk you trample upon worms. When you spray disinfectants you kill insects. . .all this is cruelty, really. It's only a question of degree. I don't know this girl at all. The cruelty, if at all you can call it that, is of an impersonal sort.

*S.D.* Like spraying the disinfectant, for example. . .

*V.S.* If you want to be sarcastic. But I consider it much more cruel to let down my parents in their old age, after all they've done for me. Do you think I should leave my sisters stranded in the streets? They're dependent on me. What you don't know is that there

are millions like me in this country and elsewhere.

*S.D.* I know, I've read the Kinsey statistics and various other studies. One out of every six. . .

*V.S.* In this country, a person has no choice really. It's different in other countries. Here you just fit into a role and do your duty towards those around you. It's all laid out for you the moment you're born. You're put in a strait-jacket. If you try to wriggle out you land a lot of people into lots of difficulties. There are millions like me who're married because they have to, and they carry on that way, as I'll be doing very soon. Fortunately, in this country, when a marriage is arranged they take into account all other considerations except the sexuality of the boy and the girl.

*S.D.* Yes, that's the bitter truth.

*V.S.* My first duty is towards my family, really. If I can manage to find some personal happiness. . .as long as it doesn't harm anybody, I don't see why not.

*S.D.* Of course you do realize that you'll be facing one serious problem. Perhaps you've already sorted it out within yourself. But you'll be marrying this girl whom you don't love and you don't see any possibilities of falling in love with her either. How will you live with her under the same roof for the rest of your life? After all don't forget you'll be seeing her day in and day out.

*V.S.* That's nothing very difficult really. I grew up with three younger sisters, and there was always mother, grandmother and my widowed cousin who lived with us. I'm accustomed to living with women in the house. In fact except for my father and myself, the rest of the members in my family are all women. In a way it's going to do me a lot of good having this girl around the house. You know she can look after my house, manage the servants, entertain my guests. Oh it's going to be such a relief, all this burden taken off my shoulders! I can concentrate more on my work, and all said and done a little feminine touch here and there in the house makes life much more pleasant. Oh, by the way, this interview has been going on for hours. You said you'd only take an hour, and I've to rush off to a board meeting in fifteen minutes.

*S.D.* Just one more question before I leave.

*V.S.* Go ahead. Make it snappy.

*S.D.* As a homosexual do you feel oppressed by society?

*V.S.* No, not at all, because no one knows I'm a homosexual.

except my various sexual partners. And now you of course. But you've promised not to divulge it.

S.D. Certainly.

V.S. So where's the question of any oppression? On the other hand, some heterosexuals are much more oppressed. I couldn't have lived with Seenu for nearly four years so openly had he been a woman. I daren't be seen with a girl so often in public as I do with Mohan. Somehow people are so little aware of homosexuality in this country, though such a lot exists. Two boys, or for that matter two girls, can do anything they want, no one says anything. Not even parents suspect. But a boy and a girl can't get away with it. Strange isn't it? But the only thing is there are laws against it.

S.D. Would you like the laws against homosexuality in this country to change?

V.S. What difference is that going to make? The laws exist only on paper. You rarely hear of anyone being prosecuted on this ground. In fact if they're going to jail everybody who's practising homosexuality in this country. . . what's the population of this country—about 500 million. . . what's one-sixth of 500 million. . . tell me quickly you're good in maths. Where would they find place to accommodate so many millions? How would they feed them, in the first place? Things are OK as they are. Let sleeping dogs lie. Of course it's different in the West. They make so much noise about everything. (*Looking at his watch*) Good God I'm late! I must rush off.

S.D. Sorry I detained you so long. Thanks for the lovely coffee.

## 2

### What is Homosexuality?

The human being is a sexual being. And the sexual life of humans has many facets. From the day of birth onwards, a child is open to all types of sexual stimulus, whether animate or inanimate, and as a person matures, various events and environmental factors influence him or her. In the world today, heterosexual intercourse is the preferred mode of self-expression for most adults, but many people also engage in other forms of sexual behaviour—such as erotic attraction to a member of the same sex. Such men and women who habitually experience strong feelings of this kind are called homosexuals.

A homosexual experience is any physical arousal a person feels in response to some one of his or her own sex. This can range from just thinking about someone and being aroused to actually having physical contact and orgasm with that person.

The term homosexual is derived from the Greek "*hom*" meaning "the same," rather than from the Latin root "*homo*," man, and it has numerous synonyms, both vernacular and technical. For instance some words like "homophile" reflect attempts to eliminate pejorative connotations, and others like bisexuality and inversion reflect particular etiological points of view. However, while all these terms are correctly applicable to either sex, common usage tends to reserve them for males and to apply "lesbianism" to sexual activities between females.

The thought of intimate physical contact with a person of one's own sex disgusts most people. But statistical findings reveal that a great many people have a homosexual experience at some point or other in their lives. A person can have homosexual experience without being predominantly homosexual, and such an experience may range from a thought or a dream to actual sexual contact. These experiences, however, may be or may not be related to a person's general sexual preferences.

One of the most fundamental and widespread misconceptions concerning homosexuality is that the human race is divided into two distinct sections, heterosexuals and homosexuals. Also, that sexual interest in one's own sex precludes a similar interest in members of the opposite sex. Nothing could be farther from the truth. One homosexual experience does not determine that a person is homosexually oriented. A person may be predominantly heterosexual, bisexual or homosexual in his or her orientation.

Those who feel a strong sexual urge towards persons of their own sex and participate in mutual sexual fondling or other forms of sexual stimulation are known as "overt" or "practising" homosexuals. And those in whom erotic feelings for the opposite sex are absent altogether, or slight in comparison to their homosexual feelings are called "exclusive" or "obligatory" homosexuals. This condition is considered more or less permanent and unchangeable. These exclusive homosexuals, especially male homosexuals, are appalled by the prospect of relations with the opposite sex. Even in such cases where women provoke no positive revulsion, the exclusively homosexual man finds that feminine charm and attractions leave him quite cold and unaroused sexually or emotionally. Therefore he would probably be impotent if he tried to have sexual relations with a woman.

On the other hand, many female homosexuals or lesbians are able to give a man the satisfaction of intercourse, though they themselves obtain little or no sexual excitement. In some way, this physiological difference between the sexes contributes to some extent to account for the observation that female homosexuals tend to be less frequently 'exclusive' in their sexual conduct.

Apart from this "exclusive" type, there are those who take to homosexuality only on odd occasions, usually when deprived of contact with the opposite sex—for instance during imprisonment. They are called "faculative" homosexuals. Such persons use the homosexual outlet only as a convenient substitute, without its interfering with their normal heterosexual capacity or feeling. These people are able to find full erotic satisfaction with those of either sex. They are termed bisexuals.

Bisexuals usually claim a permanent need for relations with both sexes, to enjoy the best of both worlds as it were. They would be classified in the middle range of Kinsey's homosexual-heterosexual scale, discussed in a later chapter of this book. Because of their dual

orientation, bisexuals are sometimes called "AC-DC"—"alternating" and "direct current"—and they may sometimes exhibit conflicts over their ambivalent sexuality. Heterosexuality, homosexuality and bisexuality cover the complete range of sex patterns among males and females, but one must not be too categorical. In reality, one encounters every conceivable gradation of attitude and behaviour from absolutely strict heterosexuals at one end of the scale to exclusive, "overt" homosexuals at the other extreme.

Irving Beiber, a psychiatrist, discussing the definitions of homosexuality writes in the *Clinical Aspects of Male Homosexuality*:

I do not diagnose patients as homosexual unless they have engaged in 'overt' homosexual behaviour. Those who also engage in heterosexual activity are diagnosed as bisexual. An isolated experience may not warrant the diagnosis, but repetitive homosexual behaviour in adulthood, whether sporadic or continuous designates a homosexual.

In spite of recent advances in the sociology of homosexuality, it is commonly viewed as a congenital deformity. The limitation of this view is seen in the fact that if homosexuality is a condition, then either people have it or do not have it, which in effect means that there are only two kinds of people in the world—heterosexuals and homosexuals. Since this is not the case and various degrees of homosexuality prevail, homosexuality cannot logically be considered congenital. Furthermore, even when some individuals are oriented predominantly in this direction, to consider them deformed is to exaggerate their differences from other people to the point of caricature.

Much has been said and written to explain the "condition" of homosexuality, but most of these explanations have begun with the assumption that homosexuality is an illness, generally a mental illness. Frequently the roots of the "disorder" are seen as lying in early childhood experience in the context of the family. Irving Beiber, in his book *Homosexuality—A Psychoanalytic Study*, sees male homosexuals, as products of homes with overbearing mothers and weak, ineffectual fathers.

This conception of homosexuality as a "condition" and the behaviour it supports merely operates as a form of social control in a

society in which homosexuality is condemned. The uncritical acceptance of this conception by social scientists can easily be traced to their concern with homosexuality as a social problem. They are inclined to accept the popular definition of what the problem is and they have been implicated in the process of social control.

The practice of social labelling of homosexuals as sexual perverts is common all over the world, but homosexuals dislike being called perverts. They object to the pejorative tone the term has acquired, and also because it suggests, unjustly, that they have chosen their unpopular way of life in deliberate defiance of heterosexual society. Besides, the labelling segregates homosexuals from others and this means that their deviant practices and their self-justification for these practices are contained within a relatively narrow group.

The guilty secrecy with which our society has long surrounded homosexuality, and the traditional stamp of "unnatural vice" or "degeneracy" it bears has influenced the average person to look upon homosexuality with rooted aversion, and his ideas about it are crude. Victimising and despising homosexuals keeps the rest of society clean in the same way as a similar treatment of some kinds of criminals helps to keep the rest of society law abiding. But the disadvantage of this technique as a social control is that there may be a tendency among people to become fixed in their deviance once they are labelled. Some homosexuals, however, welcome and support the notion that homosexuality is a condition, as it appears to foreclose the possibility of them drifting back into normality, and thus removes the element of anxious choice. In short such an attitude justifies their deviant behaviour.

Homosexuals, like heterosexuals, have not one but many life styles. Some are conventionally married men and women who occasionally indulge in furtive homosexual affairs. Others live openly as homosexual couples. If the homosexual is a government employee or a teacher, he may live in constant fear of losing his job. If he is self-employed he fears only social ostracism. On the other hand, if he is a distinguished literary figure, an artist, or an actor, he may openly declare his homosexuality to get publicity.

Homosexuals are widely distributed in every society, and they are found in all socio-economic strata. After all there are millions of them in the world, and even a larger group for whom homosexual acts constitute one of several sexual outlets. Dr Alfred Kinsey, who

published his studies of human sexual behaviour in the male and the female, implies that not only is one out of every 25 males between the ages of 16 and 60 exclusively homosexual throughout his life, but that one out of every 13 is exclusively homosexual for at least three years during his adult life. Also, one man out of every six has as much of the homosexual as the heterosexual in his history throughout such a period. The figures for women are somewhat lower but of a similar order.

Kinsey's figures have been strongly criticized, but they have never been effectively refuted, and his statistical methods were careful and sound. His findings should apply to the entire human race as a whole, irrespectively of creed, colour, or nationality.

These figures amply support that homosexuality is a much more widespread phenomenon than most people are accustomed to think. In India for instance, millions of men and women are personally conscious of homosexuality as at least an element in their sexual make-up. In other words, it is a considerably greater social problem than is generally supposed. A homosexual may be anybody, and could conceivably be everybody. In the light of this realization, the complexity of the subject becomes apparent and the essential ordinariness of this group we are considering is clearer. The stereotypes dissolve and fall away.

Many of the popular notions which condition the thinking of the majority of people are that homosexuals are a clearly identifiable group, consisting of merely stereotypes, and the most widely-held image of the homosexual is probably that of an effeminate man or a tomboyish woman. The entertainment media have unfortunately contributed a great deal to this misunderstanding by fixing the vulgar stereotypes as being always good for a laugh. One may recall the swishy, limp-wristed males in the *Boys in the Band*, or the butch, aggressive females in the *Killing of Sister George*, who were depicted more starkly than the normal-seeming characters who were also affected by an emotional pull towards their own sex. They even go so far as to make them into caricatures, which too many people equate with reality.

The myth that all or most male homosexuals are effeminate is discussed in this excerpt from *Toward a Christian Understanding of the Homosexual*:

Perhaps the most common myth propagated about the homosexual is that he is inevitably effeminate. This is far from the truth. After having made a six-year survey of homosexuality in Britain, a special committee of the Friends Home Service Committee declared, 'It cannot be too strongly urged that not all effeminate men are homosexual, and few homosexual men can be really described as effeminate.' This is borne out by several studies. Evelyn Hooker, after carefully studying thirty homosexual men, concluded that 'there is no essential relation between effeminacy of body build, manner, or speech, and homosexuality'. Similarly, Arthur Bunton, comparing the results of thirty-four homosexual offenders, eighty-seven delinquents and twenty rapists on the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality inventory, discovered that while the homosexuals rated slightly higher than the other two groups on the femininity scale, the difference was too slight to be of clinical use.

There is an almost universal conclusion among medical authorities today that no essential relationship exists between effeminacy and homosexuality. Most would agree with Havelock Ellis's statement that effeminate homosexuals 'are not more typical of inversion than the female prostitute... is typical of womanhood.'

Norman Mailer in his book *Prisoner of Sex* refers to homosexuals as "queers" and "humans-with-phalluses who choose to be female." This is nonsense, because most homosexuals choose no such thing. They choose rather to make love to, or have intercourse with others of their own sex, which is a completely different phenomenon, rather than the deliberate choice in the adoption of homosexuality. Again, Mailer uses the word "choose" which would be rejected outright by most biological and psychiatric theorists and probably by most homosexuals, because most homosexuals do not consciously choose their particular sex orientation. They are simply what they are.

Robert Lindner, in his book *Must you Conform?* refers to homosexuality as "a form of rebellion," and he describes the homosexual as a non-conformist. Perhaps there is some truth in this. Particularly in the case of females, to become homosexual is to reject the programme for marriage, family, and home, which our society holds up as normal and glorifies. However, this does not prove in any way that there is a connection in the assumption that homosexuality

involves wanting to be the opposite sex. Most studies of homosexuality tend to suggest that the majority are in fact masculine or feminine as we measure these things in our present day society.

What people do not realize is the ordinariness and commonplace-ness of homosexuality. Everytime we walk down the street, travel in a bus or train, we shall probably pass homosexuals without knowing it. Among everybody's circle of friends there are homosexuals. And most people will have at least one relative who is a homosexual.

The homosexual may be of any age, of either sex, living anywhere, and from any class or occupational section of the population. However, various studies reveal that they tend to concentrate in big cities because of the greater opportunities to make contact with others like themselves. Some people can simultaneously assert that most fashion models among men are homosexuals, and most women bus drivers are lesbians. This only expresses a confusion in the mind of the public as to the way in which the various patterns of sexual response develop and has nothing to do with reality. Certain occupations like the stage, cinema, catering, modelling, and hairdressing are reputed to attract more than their quota of homosexuals, but there are also numerous homosexuals among bus drivers, engineers, lawyers, factory workers, policemen, and they are less noticeable because they must exist and try to survive in a less acceptable atmosphere, which makes it more necessary for them to conceal their emotional attitudes and sexual orientations. It is a well-known fact that many decent, intelligent, moral, and normal people find their own sex more exciting than the opposite one. And as we have discussed earlier, they are found in all walks of life, and in all professions. And not a few of them among the clergy of the Church of England and other Christian and various other religious denominations.

Unlike members of religious or racial minorities, or those stigmatized by colour or caste, homosexuals can "pass," merging themselves unnoticeably in the majority of their heterosexually oriented fellows. And this advantage of concealment, in one sense, has proved a valuable protection against victimization. However, in another sense it is a great weakness, because the extent and commonplace nature of homosexual people and homosexual behaviour remains unknown to the public. The late Gilbert Harding is said to have stated that if all homosexual and bisexual people turned blue overnight there

would be so many indigo-tinged individuals, including some very famous ones, in all strata of society from the highest to the lowest, that their common "problem" would largely resolve itself.

A homosexual is not built differently from anyone else. He or she has the same genitalia which function in exactly the same manner as those of heterosexually oriented people. The difference lies only in the preference of having sexual relations with a member of the same sex.

There is always the question in homosexual relationships—who is the husband and who the wife? But in these relationships there is no need to define one as the husband and the other as the wife. Homosexual relationships are not based on traditional marriage roles. However, there are instances where in some homosexual relationships, one partner assumes the dominant role and the other the passive.

Margaret Mead, in her book *Sex and Temperament*, notes that dominance or submissiveness in social behaviour is not a sex-linked characteristic, and that therefore any society that defined masculinity and femininity in such terms will inevitably have a large number of temperamental misfits as "latent homosexuals"—but this cannot be correct. Because temperamental nonconformity does not necessarily imply deviant sexual impulses. Nevertheless the difficulties that these misfits may encounter in their attempts to establish normal relations, may cause some of them to seek refuge in homosexuality. This viewpoint is amply supported by Margaret Mead in her book *Male and Female*.

Some psychiatrists divide male homosexuals into two categories, "active" and "passive." They define the "active" as a forceful type who is masculine in love-making, while the passive is gentle and yielding, and in sodomy it is the active partner who penetrates the passive. They opine that the active type tends to display his masculinity, to cultivate athletic pursuits, and to reject all feminine traits, whereas the passive type is more likely to adopt pseudo-feminine mannerisms. In some homosexual circles they use such slang expressions as "bull" and "butch," or "cow" and "queen," and this shows that some of them at least must conform to a type.

Some theorists hold the viewpoint that different causes operate to produce these two types. The passive type they often regard as the "true" invert, and such a person is thought more likely to possess

a feminine physique or some glandular disturbance, whereas the active is merely looking for a substitute for a woman. However, the evidence they provide on these points is flimsy. A man who is a homosexual with predominantly passive sex habits does not necessarily affect feminine manners or possess a feminine physique. J Wortis, in his book *A Note on the Bodybuild of the Male Homosexual*, quotes two cases of passive male homosexuals with markedly effeminate mannerisms who had undoubtedly masculine physiques. And many psychiatrists have come across men habitually passive in their sexual relations who are effeminate neither in body nor in manner.

In fact studies by various scholars reveal that a great many homosexuals, possibly the majority, prefer mutually reciprocated sex activity where neither partner dominates, adopting the active or passive roles as occasion demands. Some are said to begin by taking only the active role in sodomy, thinking that by so doing they avoid being really "queer" and end up by taking the passive role to please more youthful partners, while others gravitate from a passive to an active role as they grow older.

Sexual practices, however, are more than a matter of individual choice for they may be culturally determined. Edouard Roditi, in his book *L'homosexualite* mentions that whereas in the USA mouth-genital contacts are favoured by many male homosexuals in preference to sodomy, in some Muslim countries even the lowest type of male prostitute will refuse this practice on the ground that only animals would do such a thing. A minority among homosexuals, however, do allow dissatisfaction with their gender to determine their style of love-making, since in this, as in their manners, speech, gait, dress, occupation and interests, they try their best to act like the opposite sex. But this firm cross-sex identification is really a different condition from ordinary homosexuality, and the two do not necessarily go together or have the same cause. This has been amply proved by D.G. Brown in his article "Inversion and Homosexuality" in *The American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 1958.

What is mystifying to many people is what homosexuals actually do when they are together. The answer is that they do what is physically possible, including everything that men and women do except vaginal intercourse. The most common technique in male homosexual lovemaking is hugging and kissing and mutual masturbation.



They may at times also indulge in mutual fellatio—oral-genital contact—to the point of orgasm. In American slang this is called a "blow job." They may sometimes swallow the sperm if they want, as it is not harmful. Sometimes men may indulge in what is popularly known as "69" where they lie in such a way that they can simultaneously engage in oral-genital contact. Another activity common among men is cunnilingus or anal intercourse. They may engage in various other activities of fondling and petting also, as there is no set pattern of behaviour, and a lot depends upon what the couple prefer to do spontaneously.

Love-making among female homosexuals includes mainly mutual masturbation—manipulation of the clitoris, caressing the labia, and penetration of the vagina with the fingers till sexual excitation and orgasm occurs. Sometimes the couple may also engage in cunnilingus—stimulation of the clitoris, the outer lips of the genital area, and sometimes penetration of the vagina with the tongue. Tribadism—one partner on top of the other followed by rhythmic movements to stimulate the clitoris—is a common activity among some couples. All of these acts may be done one to the other or to each other at the same time. One other activity, though rather rare among lesbians, is anilingus, which entails, in the case of females, the use of the tongue around the anal area and penetration with the finger.

It is important to note that a penis is not necessary for a woman's sexual gratification and the use of penis substitutes are rare among lesbians. The dildo is more commonly used by heterosexually oriented women during masturbation.

Fact finding research has been largely in the hands of men, and therefore there are very few published works on the lesbian question. Most investigators have concentrated on male deviance, and conspicuous neglect of the topic on the part of research workers has caused this extraordinary dearth of factual information about lesbianism. However, one work that throws considerable light on the subject is Katherine B. Davis's *Factors in the Sex Life of 2200 Women* published in New York in 1929.

Among 1,200 women graduates questioned by Katherine Davis in the course of her survey, half reported having intense emotional experiences with other women. However only a quarter admitted to physical contact recognized as sexual. This high incidence of unconsummated romantic attachments remains a feature that sharply

distinguishes lesbian tendencies from the homo-eroticism of males. In males the homo-eroticism usually manifests from the outset as a recognized sexual attraction calling for physical gratification. Such unconsummated attachments, while they may allow the participants to dissociate themselves from the taint of perversion and the guilt feeling that goes with it, can still be as powerful and disruptive of normal marital adjustment as more overt love making.

Another important feature that distinguishes lesbian relationships from that of male homosexual ones is that physical contacts between lesbians most often arise out of strong friendships or protracted sentimental attachments. For a long time, the love making between the partners may be limited to kissing and caressing without any attempt at mutual masturbation or sexual orgasm. Most lesbians, like the majority of heterosexual women, find sex without romance unattractive. And unlike their male counterparts, few lesbians are promiscuous. Very few lesbians go in for the restless searching for one-night stands after the manner so common among male homosexuals.

Some theorists have advanced the view that lesbians have less opportunity for such outlets, since specialized bars and meeting places are not readily available to women. But the counter-argument would be that it is more likely that the absence of such facilities indicates a lack of demand.

June Hopkins, a Cambridge psychologist, in *Personal Communication* (a research in progress), after a study of a hundred lesbian volunteers contacted through the Minorities Research Group, says that even among a group who openly acknowledged their lesbianism and concerned themselves with a lesbian organization, many had had physical contact with only one or two other women. Only one was seriously promiscuous. And 95 per cent considered the impulsive "one-night stand" affair unthinkable.

While agreeing that promiscuous lesbians are comparatively rare birds, Dr Albertine Winner in *Homosexuality in Women* published in 1947, refers to them as particularly dangerous because they are usually dominant, forceful personalities who may seduce weaker, more pliant women. It is not unusual for the "butch" type lesbian, in pursuit of her masculine image, to deliberately aim to "lay" as many women as possible in imitation of the male philanderer. However, Dr Winner points out, lesbians seem mercifully exempt from sexual interest in little girls—unlike their male

counterparts, some of them suffer from what is known as the "choir-boy syndrome." And as a natural consequence of the female aversion to unromantic promiscuity, lesbian prostitution is almost non-existent.

According to the Kinsey rating, exclusively homosexual behaviour appears to be comparatively unusual among lesbians. This, however, does not indicate that there is a higher incidence of bisexual feeling among women. While a man has to be strongly attracted sexually to the point of sustained erection, before he can engage in intercourse, a woman can remain passive and let a man have intercourse with her and satisfy himself, while she remains unaroused. Quite naturally, being free from the masculine dread of impotence, lesbians can, and often do, experiment heterosexually, even though they are not attracted to men, and have little spontaneous erotic feeling toward them. The social convention that requires the man to take the initiative and casts the woman in a passive role, makes this process easier for a lesbian. On the other hand, a homosexual man does not get cornered in heterosexual love making unless he starts it himself, unlike the lesbian who waits passively waiting to be stimulated by male advances.

While people envy the carefree bachelor, a spinster, left alone, evokes only mild pity and condescension in the eyes of society. Men enjoy greater advantages in the business and professional world than women do. They get better jobs, make more money and tend to achieve higher positions more easily and it is only through marriage that a woman gets a share in these economic advantages. Immaterial of the sexual orientation, most women crave the security of a settled home which increases a woman's personal and social standing, besides the fact that homosexual orientation does not necessarily deprive a woman of her desire for motherhood. Many women, even heterosexuals, for that matter, who have no interest in sex for its own sake, find the possibility of having children a powerful inducement. Moreover, the lesbian woman can marry without exposing her inadequacy—since society tends to accept the notion that many women are by nature somewhat cold and lack interest in sex.

Various studies do reveal that some homosexual women who enter into marriage for social more than sexual reasons nevertheless find fulfilment with their husbands, and become completely

weaned away from their initial lesbian tendencies. But on the other hand, just the opposite has also happened. Some such marriages have run into disaster. The root cause for this could be attributed to the fact that some women remain incompletely aroused sexually until they experience the right style of love making, and with a lesbian wife there is always the possibility that she will be swept off her feet by some passionate woman friend though comparatively late in life. Diana Chapman, in her article "What is a Lesbian?" in *The Family Doctor*, August 1965, quotes one wife as saying she had been fairly happily married for six years till she met a woman, "and it was as though I'd been sound asleep all my life." Dr. C.W. Socarides, an American psychoanalyst, in his book *Female Homosexuality* comments that in general male homosexuals do not see marriage as a solution, but lesbians are particularly liable to enter into unsatisfying unions and to persist in them to the detriment of all concerned.

Lesbians with heterosexual experience claim that an orgasm achieved through homosexual activities is incomparably more satisfying. And this is supported by the Kinsey study, which reveals a higher incidence of orgasm among lesbians than among heterosexual women. The natural explanation would be that lesbians have a natural advantage over male partners, who often have foggy notions of female anatomy and sexual functioning.

Liberation movements among women tend to be concerned primarily with the protection of women's rights in general, rather than lesbian rights in particular, and even though most members of women's liberation groups may be strictly heterosexual, there are those who maintain that women will never be free as long as they continue to rely on males for their emotional and sexual needs.

Masters and Johnson have reported that women have a greater capacity for orgasmic activity than do males, leading some to infer that in the female sexual organ, the clitoris is perhaps superior to the male penis. Kate Millet has put it this way:

The clitoris . . . is the only human organ which is specific to sexuality and to sexual pleasure. The penis has other function both in elimination and reproduction. While the male's sexual potential is limited, the female's appears to be biologically nearly inexhaustible, and apart from psychological considerations,

In spite of the various points of contrast, lesbianism and homosexuality have one feature in common. For a homosexual, self-acceptance, a major part of growing up, is particularly difficult as he faces the additional hurdle of being an outcast in society. To be a homosexual in any society is to be constantly aware that one bears a stigma. Despite recent advances in the sociology of homosexuality, there is still little genuine acceptance of it as a valid sexual and social life-style. The homosexual is constantly made aware of this—in the jokes and caricatures of theatre and cinema, the pain of parents and other family members and in the uncertainties of the future in a biased society.

All homosexuals share a need. They share a need to come to terms with the burden which the rest of society imposes on them—the handicap of belonging to a minority for which not merely is there no social acceptance but which is positively disliked and persecuted by the majority. And this gives to a homosexual's life a complexity and a dimension unknown to heterosexuals.

In every society there is a homosexual sub-culture, which is conditioned by, responds to, or reacts against, majority attitudes and values. Some homosexuals, by force of circumstances, and some perhaps also from inclination to indulge in self-conscious rejection of conventional standards of morality and virtue, regard promiscuity and unfaithfulness less seriously than most heterosexuals do. But there are also homosexuals who possess a greater honesty and integrity towards other people and a franker enjoyment of the pleasures of sex than many heterosexuals achieve.

Today, although in India there are laws which allow the prosecution of adults committing homosexual acts, prosecutions are very rare. In the USA homosexual acts are punishable only if committed in public or with a minor. But legal acceptance does not necessarily mean social acceptance and it is in this area that the homosexual feels most oppressed. The homosexual wishes to be accepted by society, to which he contributes as much as the heterosexual. This implies, of course, that society should accept that emotional and physical attraction to someone of the same sex is as meaningful as a heterosexual relationship.

The word homosexual is a generic term including both men and women, and the conventional definition of homosexuality has always been a behavioural one—a homosexual is anyone who

engages in sexual acts with another of his or her sex. Yet, only a moment's thought would show the inadequacy of the purely behavioural approach. Human beings are distinguished by a capacity for experience as well as by their behaviour—and homosexuality is as much a matter of emotion as a genital manipulation. Gore Vidal has rightly claimed that the word homosexual should be used only as an adjective to describe a sexual activity, not as a noun to describe a recognized type—for it places the homosexual outside society in a way that is not true for the heterosexual.

Laud Humphreys has suggested that the more an individual seeks to hide or reject his homosexuality, the more repressed, uptight, and illiberal his attitudes will be. The homosexual with strong but poorly repressed homosexual tendencies, in his unconscious efforts to rid himself of such impulses becomes a virulent critic of homosexuality. This is generally called a "reaction formation." Most of the time he is unaware of his own homosexual feelings and only occasionally do homosexual fantasies and impulses cross his consciousness. Occasionally he may succumb to them, perhaps under the influence of alcohol or drugs, and subsequently he may feel extremely guilty. Sometimes these tendencies are quite apparent to all but the individual himself or herself. On rare occasions such impulses threaten to break through and the individual may have episodes of intense anxiety and personality disorganization, known in clinical circles as "homosexual panic."

The homosexual who is conscious of his or her impulses may feel guilty, but does not suffer such intense apprehension. Some homosexuals who seek to escape from their conflicts take flight into alcoholism, for the loss of tension and self-consciousness and the sense of well-being it produces comes as a great boon to the conflict-ridden. Moreover, alcohol dampens inhibitions, and some of those who would scorn the thought of deviant sexual practices when sober, may enjoy intimate relationship with one's own sex without provoking guilty feelings. Alcohol also aids forgetfulness. Some homosexuals, specially among men, when their tension reaches an unbearable pitch may rush away on a mad "carouse," during which they have homosexual adventures, and afterwards return to their ordinary day-to-day life, untroubled by any conscious recollection of their lapse. *The Lost Weekend*, an American novel by Charles Jackson, deals with such a case, though the

film version of this story contains no reference to the essential theme.

In practice, psycho-analysts use the term "latent homosexuality" for conditions in which the homosexual tendency appears more deeply repressed, but remains sufficiently active to manifest itself in heavily disguised forms. By using the term "latent homosexual," psycho-analysts seek to identify a group of people who seem particularly vulnerable to homosexual conflicts because they are ill at ease with the pattern of behaviour and interests expected of their sex. The earlier analysts, including Freud, believed that some males were constitutionally lacking in energy and aggressiveness, more femininely inclined in personality, and hence more liable to homosexual conflicts than the average man. In other words, psycho-analysts often label those characters "latent homosexuals" whose character structure has features considered by society more appropriate to members of the opposite sex, and also those who find any kind of difficulty in establishing smooth and successful relationships with the opposite sex. However, this tendency to attribute all social and psychological difficulty in the sexual sphere, specially among males, to an underlying homosexual orientation, has been strongly criticized by Leon Saltzman in his *Latent Homosexuality* published in 1965. Saltzman contends that shyness with the opposite sex or enjoyment of the company of friends of the same sex does not always indicate a homosexual problem. Besides, the adjective homosexual has unfortunately gained highly derogatory connotations in our society, and its indiscriminate use may exacerbate an individual's sexual anxieties.

Some homosexuals react in other ways to their feeling of insecurity. A longing for acceptance may cause a homosexual to adopt a rigidly conventional way of life, since he does not want to draw attention to himself. He wants to be one of the herd. So he strives to avoid all taint of unorthodoxy in opinions or behaviour. A number of homosexuals have been radical reformers. While this may not seem a very serious limitation, it can in fact produce feelings of severe frustration, for example when one nurses ambitions to branch out into art, politics, or social welfare or other fields, but dare not deviate from his formal routine. This type of inhibition is quite common when an individual wishes to apply for some worthwhile job but cannot do so because he feels he is in too

vulnerable a situation to accept a responsible post. These feelings arise fundamentally from feelings of rejection and insecurity.

Admittedly, homosexuals may have some reason for feeling this way, but often their fears are exaggerated and they become miserable isolated sufferers, who feel that their shameful peculiarity cuts them off from all decent human contacts. However, given encouragement, they gain confidence in themselves, and lose much of their fear inspired attitudes in their dealing with other.

Many confirmed homosexuals, specially in India, learn that provided they keep their sexual behaviour discreet and private, they remain for the most part unmolested. They learn to bear with the slight risk of accidental exposure or blackmail. Sexuality does not play a part in the way one performs a job. The homosexual who is overly worried about being found out often makes it possible for others to believe that there is something terrible about homosexuality. Secrecy breeds curiosity. There are those who are afraid they will lose their job should their sexual orientation become known.

Blackmail becomes an issue only when an individual hides his or her sexual habits because he or she would suffer loss of job, friends and prestige. These fears are naturally well founded, unless society's attitude completely changes and we are able to accept homosexuality as part of the social spectrum.

Quite frequently the threat of blackmail to the homosexual comes from his fellow homosexuals rather than from the police or the general public as such. Blackmail, extortion, and beatings have been quite common among homosexuals, and the victim cannot usually bring himself to seek protection from family, friends, or police. Most homosexual prostitutes, who are generally young, prey on older men who patronize them, and they are notorious in this respect. Many of these young men justify their behaviour as do many female prostitutes, by saying that they are simply "giving people what they deserve"—and a male prostitute generally does not even consider himself a homosexual, for he presumably participates in the sexual act only for money.

Isn't homosexuality a sign of a society breaking down? This question no doubt arises in the minds of everyone who has followed Greek and Roman history, their glory and their final collapse. In answer to this question I shall quote here from a pamphlet issued

by the Gay Activist Alliance:

The Persian empire declined quite nicely along with strong anti-homosexual taboos. Homosexuality flourished freely at the zenith of the Roman Empire, but the decline was accompanied by an increase in anti-homosexual restrictions. Homosexuality thrived during the heights of Periclean Greece, Renaissance Italy and Medieval Japan. And some cultures in which homosexuality has been accepted, like those of certain African and American Indian tribes, neither rose nor fell from world-dominating heights. The acceptance or non-acceptance of homosexuality had nothing whatever to do with the rise or decline of any culture. And no reputable historian since the 18th century has taken this theory seriously.

A careful study of the past histories of various societies show that the sexual orientation of the people had in fact very little or nothing at all to do with the rise and fall of power.

### 3

## Homosexuality through the Ages

Homosexuality is as old as the human race. It is found as much in advanced civilizations as in primitive cultures. Hindus (the word in its ethnic rather than creedal connotation) have a long tradition of homosexual love. *Kamasutra*, the ancient Hindu treatise on love, considered the world's first definitive manual on the art and science of sex, consists of an entire chapter on *Aparishtaka*—homosexual intercourse. The sage Vatsyayana, writing between 400 and 500 A.D. summarized the contents of many previous Sanskrit texts in this manual and his book represents a distillation of centuries of experimentation in sex techniques.

Vatsyayana observed that the *Anthapura* or harem was a hot-bed of female homosexuality. According to him the women in the royal harem, unable to have any contact with men being confined within the four walls of the harem, could not have their sexual desires satiated, since they had only one husband between them, and therefore they were obliged to resort to homosexual practices.

Kautilya in the 4th century B.C. has recorded the existence of *Strirajya*—kingdom of women, in various parts of India. Again, in the 4th century, Kalidasa refers to such a kingdom. In this kingdom, men were completely excluded and all work was done by the women alone. Mutual relations between the women of these all-female realms are reputed to have been characterized by strong homosexual feelings.

In the *Mahabharata* there are two references to all-female realms, ruled by the female monarchs Alli and Pavazha Kodi. Later, in the 7th century, the Chinese pilgrim Hiuen Tsang refers to a kingdom of women in two islands. The first island he named *Ratnadwipa*—island of gems, but he is vague about the name or location of the other. However, some have identified it with Simhala or modern Sri Lanka.

Herodotus in the 5th century B.C. speaks about some *Strirajyas* outside India. The island of Lesbos is off the coast of Greece in the

Aegean Sea. It was in this island that the Greek poetess Sappho made herself the leader of a group of women who indulged in homosexual practices. On this island, homosexuality was almost a way of life, with members of the same sex seeking one another's company for true love, and they engaged in heterosexual relationships for the sole purpose of reproduction.

Sappho hated men and adored women. Her poems extolled the virtues of the love of women for one another. Her colony made a cult of female love and attracted many thousands of women to its shores. The women did not just happen to find themselves there. Sappho had an excellent recruiting system. She sent teams of women all over the Mediterranean area to lure heterosexual young women to the shores of the island of Lesbos. The women were usually enticed with banquets, heady wines and even strong drugs. Many of these young women, once settled in Lesbos and converted to Sappho's way of life, refused to return to their homes and husbands on the mainland.

The only males permitted on the island were usually eunuchs or castrated males—and that too only for doing the heavier work. It was almost completely a self-sustained economy. Once a year, however, a number of virile, handsome young men from mainland Greece were invited to attend an orgy—being engaged for the occasion strictly as studs. Babies resulting from this one-night stand were segregated according to sex, and after weaning, the male children were sent to foster homes on the mainland, and the female babies were kept on the island to perpetuate the colony.

It was this highly organized little island of Sappho that gave rise to the term lesbianism or female homosexuality.

Homosexual behaviour has existed at all times in all parts of the world, but it is very difficult to assess what such behaviour has meant in any given culture. The tutorial relationships between older and younger Greek men are said to have had a sexual component. In classical Greece, homosexuality achieved social recognition as an accepted and expected form of love between normal males. J.Z. Eglinton states in his book *Greek Love* that love between youths and somewhat older men was considered most appropriate, as the older men could set a good example to the younger ones.

When Plato wrote so sublimely of the emotions and aspirations of love, he was describing in fact homosexual love—what we call a per-

version today. Male homosexual sentiment [per]vaded the whole fabric of Greek society. Homosexuality to the Greeks was not merely a safety valve for excess lust—it meant more to them. In their eyes, it was the highest and noblest passion.

The Greek literature dealt entirely with male pursuits and the masculine point of view. All the most admired virtues, courage and nobility of mind, were essentially attributed to men. The women were uneducated and lived in seclusion. Domestic life, as we know it, did not exist, so that men of culture looked always to their own sex for love and stimulating companionship.

Greeks held sensual enjoyment an important part of life, and on matters of sex they had an uninhibited outlook, and were not afraid to express their sentiments. To the Greeks it seemed quite natural that men should be passionately attracted by beautiful youths and it was not considered unusual for an older man to take under his wing some favourite youth and to act as his special friend and mentor. In fact, it was considered a failure on the part of an older man if he did not become a guardian of one younger than himself whom he could instruct in the manly virtues. And a youth felt disgraced if he failed to win such a friendship.

The human body, specially the body of the athletic young male, was admired as an object of great beauty, and it was considered a fitting subject for eulogistic poems and exquisite sculpture. The influence of this ideal in Greek poetry and sculpture of the period is well known.

Greek legends abound in homosexual sentiment. And it was prominent in the heyday of Greek civilization as well as during its decay. Authors depicted homosexual love as a lofty passion that raised men above themselves. Plato wrote in his *Symposium*:

And if there were only some way of contriving that a State or army should be made up of lovers and their loves, they would be the very best governors of their own city, abstaining from all dishonour, and emulating one another in honour, and when fighting at each other's side, although a mere handful, they would overcome the world. For what lover would not choose rather to be seen by all mankind than by his beloved, either when abandoning his post or throwing away his arms? He would be ready to die a thousand deaths rather than endure this. Or who would desert his beloved

or fail him in the hour of danger? The veriest coward would become an inspired hero, equal to the bravest, at such a time. Love would inspire him.

Some Greek cities are said to have had regiments of lovers fighting side by side. The Spartan and Theban army were organized on just this theory.

The Greeks frowned upon indiscriminate infatuations, and Socrates's fascination for youth only brought him discredit. Furthermore, the cult of effeminacy in young men, and the bartering of sexual favours for financial gains evoked the strongest disapproval. Various provisions against homosexual abuses were included in the Penal Code of ancient Athens, some of which were enacted in the sixth century B.C. by Solon.

Solon permitted relations between adult citizens but he forbade a slave to have association with a free-born youth. The penalty he recommended was public whipping. Any Athenian citizen who prostituted his body for money was punished with the forfeiting of all civil rights. There was also strict legislation against the seduction of children. Lowes G. Dickinson in his *Greek View of Life* states that for an outrage against a minor a man could be sentenced to death or to a heavy fine. A father or guardian who prostituted his son was liable to severe punishment. The boy himself, provided he was under age, suffered no legal penalty.

Romanticized homosexual love, with its association of excellence and manliness, seemed to disappear with the Roman influx. In Roman literature, homosexuality became a subject of amusement and contempt, and it was connected with orgiastic debauchery and prostitution. Juvenal and Petronius in their satirical writings attribute every possible vice to the Roman rulers. Petronius in his *Satyricon* portrays a society bent upon pleasure without restraint. He tells about a youth whom an older man attempts to seduce, but the young one learns nothing from his adventure and in turn tries forcibly to seduce a still younger person.

Nero's famous orgies were disgusting and cruel. Men and women suffered in them equally and reached the depths of squalor. Sporus was Nero's favourite. Nero had him castrated, went through all the ceremonies of marriage and made the poor youth his "wife." Many Roman emperors were tainted with the same blemish. One Senator

of Julius Caesar called him "every woman's man and every man's woman."

Studies by various experts in the sexual behaviour of that period reflect the moral of an age in which such behaviour was commonplace, and serves to confirm what has already been deduced by anthropological studies, that homosexuality and homosexuals soon make themselves apparent whenever they are given free rein, the consequences, whether good or bad depending on how the community handles the situation.

Since the decline of classical Greece, male homosexuality has not been raised to the status of a desirable ideal. However, pale reflections of ancient Sparta have from time to time appeared in various militaristic systems. The cult of masculine valour, hero-worship, the great emphasis on manly fortitude and valour, the tradition of the pure woman to be admired from afar—all this helped to foster homosexual tendencies at the time of the crusades. It is with this background that homosexual behaviour was attributed to such bands as the Templars.

P. Nathan in *The Psychology of Fascism* states that a somewhat similar situation prevailed in recent times in Nazi Germany when the Hitler youth banded together for the sake of a mystic, manly ideal that overrode all family ties.

Of 76 societies surveyed by Dr Ford and Dr Beach, about a third disapproved of homosexual behaviour, and punishment for such activity ranged from derision to death. The remaining two-thirds approved of some forms of homosexuality. To quote an example, among the tribe of the Komangas, the most numerous and powerful people on the Alaskan coast, some male children were reared from infancy for female roles in all activities. After reaching puberty such a male actually married an important man in the community and was regarded as a shaman—one who is endowed with magical powers.

There are also many other groups in which institutionalized forms of male homosexuality existed. One among them is the warrior Mohave Indians of the south-western USA. In these communities, some selected men went through special ceremonies and were received into a special class called "Berdaches," "Alyahs" or "Shamans." These men dressed and functioned as women. That was not all: some also went so far as to pretend to menstruate or to become pregnant. They "married" men who might also have female wives, but the former occupied respectable positions in the group.

The study of homosexuality in the past was largely dependent on secondary evidence rather than direct observation, and therefore the reliability and validity of such evidence is open to question because what the original observers reported may have been distorted by their disapproval of homosexuality and by their definition of it. For instance, Marc Daniel tries to refute accusations of homosexuality against Pope Julian II by producing four arguments, the main argument being that the Pope had many enemies who might wish to blacken his name. Secondly, he and his supposed lover, Alidosi, both had mistresses. The third argument—neither of them was at all effeminate. And lastly, that the Pope had other men friends about whom no similar accusations were made.

Here the incongruity lies in the fact that Daniel is trying to fit an early sixteenth-century Pope to the modern conception of the homosexual as effeminate, exclusively homosexual, and sexual in relation to all men. Over the past seventy years, various scholars have tried to trace the history of sex and homosexuality in particular. G.R. Taylor in his work *Sex in History* published in 1953, writes that the popular notion that homosexuality is a social problem of the present day, due to a recent relaxation of the moral standards, can be disproved by the briefest excursion into history. In each century, one finds the question of homosexuality arising and even in periods when detection meant death the practice was known to be widespread.

Elizabethan literature has homosexual allusions. M. Hirschfeld in his book *Sexual Anomalies and Perversions* writes that in 1631, the Earl of Castlehaven and two of his servants were dispatched on the scaffold and the gallows, respectively, for acts of sodomy.

At the end of the seventeenth century, however, other kinds of information about homosexuals became available. And with this information it became possible to move from speculations about individuals to the descriptions of homosexual life. It is at this period that references to homosexuals as a type and to a rudimentary homosexual sub-culture, mainly in London, began to appear. However, the earliest descriptions of homosexuals do not coincide exactly with the modern conception. There is much more stress on effeminacy. This is obvious from the terms that emerged in this period to describe homosexuals—Nancy-boy, Molly, Madge Cull, and such names, in contrast to modern terms like fag, queer, gay, and bent.

*In Hell upon Earth: or the Town in Up-roar*, published in London in

1729, "Anon" describes the widespread homosexual life of that period:

They also have their walks and appointments, to meet and pick up one another, and their particular houses of resort to go to, because they dare not trust themselves in an open tavern. About twenty of these sort of houses have been discovered, besides the Nocturnal Assemblies of great numbers of the like vile persons, what they call the 'Markets' which are the Royal Exchange, Lincoln's Inn, Bog houses, the South side of St. James' Park, the Piazzas in Covent Garden, St. Clements' Church Yard, etc.

It would be a pretty scene to behold them in their Clubs and Cabals, how they assume the air and affect the name of Madam or Miss, Betty or Molly, with a chuck under the chin, 'Oh, you bold pullet, I'll break your eggs', and then frisk and walk away.

Exclusive homosexuality as a notion became well established during this period. And it is during this period that two Englishmen, Laith and Drew, were accused of Pederasty. But the evidence given by the plaintiff was not sufficient, and the defendants denied the accusation and produced witnesses to prove their predilection for women. In consequence they were acquitted. Their prediction for women being an effective argument proves that during that period society perceived homosexual behaviour as incompatible with heterosexual tastes.

Thus the conception of homosexuality as a condition, with a distinct, separate, specialized role of "homosexual" emerged in England at the end of the seventeenth century and is now firmly established in society.

The nineteenth century was full of homosexual scandals. There are ample reports of homosexual brothels and clubs. A well-known meeting-place of homosexuals, the White Swan, headquarters of the Vere Street Coterie, was exposed in 1810, and seven men who were discovered indulging in homosexual practices were sent to the pillory in the Haymarket. A huge mob gathered and behaved with unusual brutality, and street vendors hawked missiles to angry crowds who hurled them at the prisoners, causing them severe injury. Two well-known cases of this century are the suicide of the Foreign Minister, Castlereagh, because of the fear of being denounced, and the imprisonment of Oscar Wilde after three sensational trials.



Oscar Wilde was convicted mainly on the evidence of self-confessed male prostitutes and blackmailers who turned Queen's Evidence and thus went free. And when he was sentenced, it is recorded that prostitutes in the street outside the Old Bailey, where he was tried, lifted their skirts to dance in glee. Sermons on the subject were delivered throughout the country. The learned judge regretted that the maximum penalty he was allowed to give was totally inadequate and expressed his utmost indignation at the evidence of "corruption of the most hideous kind."

Leaving the European countries and coming nearer home, the history of our own civilization shows that the cultivation of a severely repressive attitude has consistently failed to eradicate the homosexual problem. Apart from the references to homosexuality in the Hindu epics and temple carvings, there have been many references to homosexual activity in India even in quite recent times. In the '30s, Mahatma Gandhi wrote in the columns of the journal *Young India*, edited by him:

Some years ago the Bihar Government in its Education Department had an enquiry into the question 'Unnatural vice' in its schools. The Committee of Enquiry had found the existence of the vice even among teachers, who were abusing their position among their boys, in order to satisfy their unnatural lust. I have had literature too, sent me from other provinces, inviting my attention to such vice and showing that it was on the increase practically all over India in public as well as in private schools. Personal letters received from boys have confirmed the information. The remedy for all secret vice is most difficult to find when it affects guardians of boys which the teachers are. If the salt loses its savour, where-with shall it be salted?

The Minister of Education stated, in reply to a question in the Punjab Legislative Council in 1934:

The number of cases of seduction amongst the secondary department of the schools in the province during the last five years was 31; 10 of the offenders were dismissed from the services, two were awarded rigorous imprisonment by the Court of Law, eight cases were under consideration of the authorities, while in ten cases the charges could not be proved.

Mr K.B. Khurshid Ahmed, a retired Inspector of Schools, in his letter to *The Eastern Times* of 22 October 1932, says:

To think of the remedy I think we should look to the causes. Here in this province very young boys, generally unmarried, on passing out of normal schools get jobs in village schools, with little or no supervision. They sometimes form such vicious connections which generally go undetected. The site of the school, generally isolated from the main village, furnishes a very safe asylum for the purpose.

It is only very rigid supervision and a firm hand that can stem the tide, but this is not forthcoming everywhere, and the detection of the crime is a very difficult task. The connection in most cases takes the form of a love affair and neither of the parties concerned would like to disclose the secret, and the parents are lulled into sleep by the outward regard the culprit has for their son.

Even in cases when compulsion has been used and the outraged son has taken his woeful tale to his parents, no action is taken, as it is feared it will tell on the reputation of the boy and of the family. The headmaster too, if complaints come to him, would try to hush up to keep the fair name of the school from being soiled. In these days of racial difference, the culprit finds a ready asylum to take refuge. The charge brought against him becomes a racial question; defence evidence becomes easily available and the case is lost.

Another letter along similar lines is written by Mr P.N. Maulik, Principal, S.D. College in *The Tribune* of 1934. He writes:

As a teacher of fairly long experience and as a member of the management of some schools, I may be permitted to observe with some authority that the vice is quite widespread among students, and in most schools there are some teachers who are corrupters of the young. I have frequently found that many such teachers are otherwise very useful and sometimes really efficient workers. Their efficiency and usefulness becomes a successful cloak for their vice.

4 The proper remedy for this vice is drastic regulations of the Education Department providing for the dismissal or voluntary

resignation of perverse teachers even on strong grounds of suspicious conduct where definite proof is not available.

From these statements and opinions, it is clear that homosexual activity has been quite rampant in India particularly in boarding schools and private schools. It is also interesting to note that homosexuality has taken on a flavour of pederasty in India, since in most of the cases that are brought to public notice, the participants are older men and younger boys—teacher-pupils. And this perhaps could be explained by the fact that since homosexuality is not accepted in the community, a man seeking to have his sexual desires satiated, particularly if he is a teacher, is left with only one way—and that is to bully a boy, particularly one on whom he can exercise a certain amount of power, into submission, and make him yield to his sexual wants.

Homosexuality in India, it appears, has been more widespread in some provinces than others. Mr R.B.L. Kanwar Sain, Barrister-at-Law, late Chief Justice, Jammu and Kashmir State, wrote in *The Tribune* of January 21, 1934: "The evil is not sporadic, nor is it confined to any particular locality, but is widespread and our province stands next only to N.W.F. Province in the gravity of the situation."

Even today, in India the prevalence of homosexuality among men as well as women is reputed to be greater in the north and the north-west than in other parts of the country. However, in the absence of proper statistical findings, one must concede that this is only a generalization.

## 4

### Religion and Homosexuality

Although Hindu legends, arts, and literature of the past abound in references to homosexuality, and although archaeologists have found pre-historic cave drawings showing female figures engaged in cunnilingus, Hinduism itself as a religion is silent about the practice of homosexuality. But Hinduism is not a dictatorial religion—it has never been one—and this accounts for the diverse social and cultural traditions of the Hindu people. The reference in the *Ramayana* to Sri Rama as *Pumsamohana Rupaya*—so handsome as to be pleasing even to men—mildly suggests that homosexuality could not have been highly abhorred by the Hindu religion in ancient times.

Vatsyayana, author of *Kamasutra*, the first literary classic in the world that realistically explored sex relations, was a great Hindu sage. He devotes an entire chapter in his treatise to the art of homosexual love. This he could not have done if Hinduism prohibited homosexuality.

As for the Judeo-Christian religion, there can be no doubt that the early church regarded homosexual practices with unqualified disapproval. The attitude of the early church fathers towards such practices was based largely on the commonly accepted interpretation of Genesis 19: 4-11, in the story of Sodom and Gomorrah. Ethical pronouncements against the homosexual through the ages have been derived largely from the Sodom and Gomorrah episode. The complaint of the early church fathers and particularly John Chrysostom was that homosexuality was contrary to nature.

Another reason for condemning homosexuality is given by Clement of Alexandria and Novatian. He held the view that the Jewish laws concerning unclean animals are based on the ancient beliefs that such animals, particularly the rabbit and the weasel, had unusual and abnormal sex habits.

But there is another argument that is more cogent and has had a profound influence in the doctrine of the Church. It is offered by St Augustine in the *Confessions* (iii, viii, 15) where he states: "Those shameful acts against nature, such as were committed in Sodom, ought everywhere and always to be detested and punished. Not only because they are contrary to nature, but also, and more basically, because they are contrary to the purpose of sexuality, which is procreation."

The key phrase in the passage of Sodom and Gomorrah, Genesis 19: 14-11, is found in verse 5: "Bring them out to us, that we may know them." Traditionally scholars have interpreted this demand of the men of Sodom as indicating a desire on their part to have sexual relations with the guests of Lot; and the subsequent destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (verses 24-25) is then seen to be God's punishment upon the men of Sodom for their perverted sexual appetites.

However, Dr Derrick S. Bailey has taken exception to this interpretation. He has demonstrated fairly conclusively that the evil which Lot "suspects of the men of Sodom and for which God punishes them is not a perverted sexual appetite, but rather a breach of the rules of hospitality." Bailey's argument is that Lot is an alien, a sojourner in Sodom, and he may be exceeding his rights by entertaining two foreigners without first presenting them to the established residents of the city. The demand in verse 5 Bailey interprets as a desire to have Lot's guests turned over to them, the legal hosts. Lot's plea "do not act so wickedly" (verse 7) would then be understood as meaning, "Since I have, rightly or wrongly, taken these strangers under my roof, do not flout the obligation of hospitality by this unseemly demonstration—take no action against my guests, for they are yours also."

Bailey supports his interpretation with the following evidence. Firstly, the word "know" which is used in verse 5 appears 943 times in the Old Testament, yet in only 10 cases is it used to indicate sexual coitus, and in each of these cases it refers to heterosexual coitus. Secondly, several parallel legends can be found in ancient literature (including the passage in Judges 19: 16-26) most of which serve as lessons pertaining to hospitality. Finally, references are made to the "Sin of Sodom" in both the Old and New Testaments. And it receives a sexual connotation for the first time in the apocryphal Book of

Jubilees, which is separated by many centuries from the original tradition surrounding the story.

In consideration of this evidence, Bailey maintains, the chief text used by Church leaders throughout the centuries in their condemnation of the homosexual apparently has nothing to do with homosexuality.

On the other hand, Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 clearly condemn homosexual practices. The former passage declares that such practices are "an abomination" and the latter prescribes a penalty of death for those who take part in them. Again, condemnation of specific homosexual practices are found in Genesis 9:21-27 (against homosexual incest), Deuteronomy 22:5 (against transvestism) and Deuteronomy 23:17 (against malecult prostitution). Finally, in I Kings 14:24, 15:12 and 22:46, there is the attempt of the kings of Judah to abolish male-cult prostitution. However, in none of these passages is homosexuality singled out as a uniquely horrible offence. But it is listed along with numerous other offences.

From these passages, it is quite clear that the Hebrews condemned homosexuality, but it is not very clear why they condemned it. Sometimes, however, it has been argued that the rationale behind this condemnation lay in an association of homosexual practices with the pagan customs of the enemy Assyrians and Egyptians.

William Graham Cole advances that a more pragmatic purpose may also have had some bearing on the Hebrew attitude—a kind of economic determinism wherein the Hebrews exalted procreation as the sole purpose of sexual acts to encourage the survival and growth of the Hebrew nation. However, there is no scriptural evidence to support this theory—it is only a conjecture.

The text in the scriptures that has most influenced Christian sexual ethics and the traditional attitude toward homosexuality is the creation account in Genesis. Most theologians interpret the text as expressing as God-willed the so-called natural state of heterosexuality, and they assume that sexual differentiation is not only normative for human relations, but constitutes the very essence of what is human. And to be human is to be purely male or female. Only in marriage desirous of reproduction is that essential duality kept in balance. They maintain that human sexuality derives its meaning exclusively in terms of the relation of male and female in a procreative union. Further, they suggest that the likeness to God in man is precisely in

terms of that sexuality by which men and women are able to enter into a covenant of love with one another. It is, however, difficult to understand to what extent the image of human sexuality recorded in Genesis is to be understood as a revelation of God's will or merely a reflection of the needs of the primitive human community.

A cultural circumstance that concerns homosexual activity in particular was the common practice in the Middle East to submit a captured enemy to sodomy as an expression of domination, scorn and contempt. The male population and the Jews undoubtedly suffered this humiliation during their captivity both in Egypt and in Babylon. Quite naturally, homosexual activity, as long as it was understood as necessarily expressing hatred and contempt, was morally unacceptable. And in a society where the dignity of the male was a primary consideration, it can easily be perceived, any activity necessarily associated with the degradation of the male was a serious offence. It is interesting to note in the code of Leviticus, it is not homosexual activity as such that is condemned, but only male homosexual activity—under the penalty of death on the ground that it involves using a man as if he were a woman. There is no specific condemnation of female homosexual activity.

When we look closely into the texts of the Old Testament, which explicitly refer to homosexual activity, it is clear that the Church traditionally believed that homosexuality was contrary to the will of God as expressed in the scriptures. However, before we attempt to examine this belief, it is very necessary to understand the definition of homosexuality as referred to in the scriptures and in reality.

It would seem that the Biblical authors did not manifest the same understanding of that reality as we have today. Therefore, one cannot but wonder whether what is understood today as the true homosexual and his activity is ever the object of explicit moral condemnation in the scriptures. The definition has to be based on the distinction between the homosexual condition or psychic orientation from homosexual activity. Most human beings are capable of either homosexual or heterosexual activity. This shows that there is no necessary connection between homosexual activity and the homosexual condition.

By virtue of this, there is an important distinction to be made in the moral judgement to be passed on heterosexuals indulging in homosexual activities and a true homosexual involved in the same activities.

However, it is only in recent times that knowledge has been acquired of homosexuality as a psychic condition, and therefore it is obvious that the Biblical authors knew nothing of the homosexual condition as such, but refer exclusively to homosexual activity undertaken by those they presume to be heterosexually inclined by nature.

There are over 16 references to the Sodom and Gomorrah episode in the Old Testament. None mention homosexual activity. All make references to pride and inhospitality. And in the New Testament the only reference to Sodom, Luke 10:10, identifies its sin as inhospitality. Christ tells his disciples that if they are not well received in any town they should shake the sand of that town off their sandals—"I tell you on the day of judgement Sodom will fare better than that town."

Then how do scholars explain the seeming sexual connotation of the attack by the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah on the angelic visitors? Their explanation is that one of the primary themes of the Yahwist author of this passage in Genesis was an attack against pagan fertility worship, which included the use of male prostitutes. The Yahwist author argues in an earlier passage of Genesis that due to sacred prostitution of the fertility rites seeking rain, a great flood was sent by God that wiped out all life. And so too in Sodom a rain followed the orgies, a rain of fire and brimstone with the result that the land remained permanently sterile.

The first recorded sources of the interpretation of the sin of Sodom and Gomorrah as homosexual activity are the writings of the classical historians Josephus and Philo in the first century A.D. It is quite obvious that Josephus reads back into the Sodom and Gomorrah episode all the features he disliked most of contemporary life in Alexandria. Many Church fathers accepted the interpretation of Josephus, and every time a major catastrophe struck the Roman Empire the early Christian Emperors would appeal to Josephus's interpretation of the Sodom and Gomorrah story to justify the passing of new legislation against homosexual activities. Even as late as the last century, the English law codifier William Blackstone in his *Commentary of the Laws of England* appeals to the same interpretation of the Sodom and Gomorrah legend to establish the legal rights and obligations of the State to try to eliminate homosexual activities by legal sanction.

*The misinterpretation of the Sodom and Gomorrah episode in the*

Bible is probably one of the supremely ironic paradoxes of history. For centuries, Western society, based on Christian teachings, has been victimizing homosexuals with extreme inhospitality and persecution—all in the name of a mistaken interpretation of the true crime of Sodom and Gomorrah. And the crime has been repeated over and over.

There is an important difference in the treatment of human sexuality between the Old and New Testaments. Contact with God, in the Old Testament was connected with being the people of God, because in this chosen people alone God dealt with man. This being the case, it was imperative for every man and woman of Israel to receive this life and pass it on in marriage. Sexual activity was closely linked with this sealed contract and the handing down of the promise from generation to generation.

In the New Testament, however, membership in the people of God is no longer a question of human descent. People of God are no longer bound together by blood relationship. In Christ's words, "I can raise up children to Abraham from these stones!" One can be reborn into the new community of love through baptism, and thus marriage no longer need occupy the central place it had under the old covenant. Thus, in the new covenant it is given to anyone to be fertile in the new community through a love which surpasses even marital love in value and therefore in fertility.

This new understanding of human love lies at the origin in the early Christian community of other vocational choices besides marriage and other forms of human community besides family—for example, the celibate community, and one can no longer identify the love between men which makes them the likeness of God exclusively with the heterosexual relation in marriage.

In the New Testament there are only three references to homosexuality. All three appear in the Pauline Epistles: Romans 1:27, I Corinthians 6:9, I Timothy 1:10. The first two passages contain merely passing references to homosexuality, and the third is a secondary reference used as an illustration of idolatry. The passage in I Corinthians lists homosexuals along with "idolaters," "thieves" and "drunkards" as being among those who will not "inherit the Kingdom of God." And clearly homosexuality is not singled out as being more serious than those other offences.

In I Timothy 1:10, the third passage "sodomites" are listed as being

"immoral persons" along with "kidnappers," "liars," "perjurers" and "whatever else is contrary to sound doctrine." Once again homosexuality is merely included in a list of offences but received no special attention. Both these passages mention homosexuality as being immoral and contrary to the will of God. But in neither case does Paul explain the reason for its being classified as such. However, in Romans 1:17, Paul deals specifically with the problem of homosexuality, but even here he fails to consider it a separate problem.

Seen in the context of verses 18-28, homosexuality is described in verse 27 as resulting from a more basic sin of idolatry, and quite clearly what Paul is chiefly concerned with in this passage is the influence that Greek paganism has had on Roman Christians. The chief sin of the Romans is that "although they knew God they did not honour him as God" (verse 21), for they had "exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man or birds or animals or reptiles" (verse 23). It was only a result of their prior religious confusion that "God gave them up to dishonourable passions" (verse 26) and again the "passions" described are those of men who "gave up natural relations with women" (verse 27). They are, however, not the passions of inverts who have never been attracted to women.

From the above illustrations it is quite clear that Paul does not really deal with the problem of homosexuality. He condemns it. But evidently, he does not consider it important enough to warrant special attention—even though it was widespread in the Greco-Roman world. He fails to give any logical explanations as to why it should be condemned. He simply declares that homosexuals are "immoral persons" who have been given up by God to "dishonourable passions" and thus will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Both in the Old and New Testaments the homosexual is condemned. But in no place is he singled out as being particularly offensive. And in no instance is there any elaboration on why he should be considered offensive at all.

The homosexual is never mentioned by Jesus, and receives only scant attention from St. Paul. And yet somehow through the ages the homosexual has been singled out as a particularly offensive kind of individual. He has also been declared as one who is not worthy of membership in the 'fellowship of believers—and ironically, many of those who have condemned him most strongly have pointed out to

the Bible as showing him to be the worst of sinners.

There are no references to homosexuality in the four Gospels. And the three references in the New Testament are all in Paul's epistles. The I Corinthians 6: 9 and I Timothy 1: 10 are frequently translated as including homosexuals among the list of those who are excluded from the kingdom of God and outside the law of God.

The two Greek words *Malakoi* and *Arsenkoitai* were sometimes translated as referring to homosexuals. But while the King James version translates these terms as the "effeminate" and as the "abusers of themselves with mankind," the Revised Version translates both terms as homosexuals. However, this translation fails to distinguish the homosexual condition, which is normally neutral from homosexual activities. Therefore, one cannot help but draw the conclusion that this translation is at fault, and also there is serious reason to doubt that either term necessarily refers to homosexual activity as such. Literally the word *Malakoi* means soft, and in a moral context means the morally debauched.

The Greeks in Paul's time had many terms such as *Paiderastes*, which refer to homosexual activity, and later Christian writers sometimes used the term to refer to those involved in anal intercourse. Of course anal intercourse is not necessarily or exclusively a homosexual activity. Quite often this term is used to refer to male prostitution, and this very meaning, Jerome attributes in the Vulgate translation *Mascute concubitores*—male concubines.

That leaves us with the one remaining text in the New Testament, Romans 1:26. In this, homosexual activities are referred to as *Para Phusin*, meaning contrary to nature, but here again it is not clearly explained as to what Paul meant by nature. Paul uses this word seven times, and not in one instance does he make a sharp distinction between custom and nature. A clear example is that he speaks of the Jews as circumcised by nature, whereas the Gentiles are uncircumcised by nature. He goes so far as to write, "Does not nature teach you that, if a man has long hair, it is a shame."

It is quite obvious that Paul was shocked by the contrast between Jewish and Greek customs in sexual matters, and he understood the Greeks who indulged in homosexual activity as heterosexuals involved in homosexual activity, contrary to their own sexual orientation. Paul's main point in the Roman text is that he understood homosexual practices to be the result of idolatry and, thus, a sign of alie-

nation from God, and consequently he dealt with homosexual activities in the same context as the Old Testament, the context of idolatry.

However, Biblical scholars point out that the primary message of the Old Testament concerning human sexuality was that love, including sexual love, requires respect for the other person and the sin which man can commit in his sexual conduct with another consists in dishonouring the person of a fellow human being. The basic message was really this—if one does not acknowledge the only true personal God, it follows unavoidably that one also will not acknowledge one's fellow man as a person who has a value of his own. Implicit in the New Testament is the belief that man's sexual drive should be so directed that it can be totally at the disposition of his drive to achieve union in love with his fellow men and with God.

The mediaeval Church inherited many of the moral attitudes of the early Church fathers, who incorporated them into the legislation of numerous councils and synods. At the Council of Elvira (305-6) and again at the Council of Ancyra (314), homosexuals were refused baptism and admission to the catechumenate until such time as they would renounce their evil ways and repent for their sins.

Basil, in 375, declared that homosexuals should be excluded from the sacraments until they had done penance for fifteen years. There were instances when homosexuals were punished quite harshly with penalties ranging from castration (Spain, 650) to burning at the stake (Jerusalem, 1120) and more common were the penalties laid down in the penitentials, which ranged from twenty days, for a boy committing sodomy with another boy, to twenty years for a bishop committing the same act. However, unlike earlier legislation, careful distinctions were made as to the various types of homosexual acts and the conditions under which such acts might occur, and the penalties varied accordingly.

Augustine and St. Thomas tended to be pedantic and followed the early Church fathers, particularly Augustine and St. Thomas, in the *Summa Theologica* which speaks of our "*peccata contranaturam*"—"unnatural vices" or "sins against nature"—bestiality, sodomy, homosexual genital contact, and mutual masturbation. These "unnatural vices" declares St. Thomas, are the results of excessive lust, and thus exceed "the order and the mode of reason. They are particularly sinful, because they occur in a situation in which the created purpose

of sexuality—procreation—cannot occur.”

One of the harshest statements against homosexuality to appear in the Middle Ages was that of the *Liber Gomorrhitanus* of Peter Damiani, who declared that all homosexual offences are equally disgusting and thus deserve the maximum punishment by the Church, particularly when the offenders are clerics. However, he met with rebuke from Pope Leo IX, who responded with *Nos humanus Agentes* suggesting that not only should one treat homosexual offences less harshly than others, but that clerics who have committed such offences should not necessarily be deposed from their orders.

Pope Leo's letter has sometimes been used as an example of the Church's condemnation of homosexuality, since it does say that homosexual offences should be punished. However, it is, as Bailey has pointed out, “chiefly, remarkable for its emphasis upon the need for a sense of proportion and a humane approach to the question of homosexual practices.”

The New Testament ideal was not immediately assimilated in Christian thought, and there was no change in social and interpersonal relations. The basic influence on early Western Christian tradition was not the New Testament but the popular stoic philosophy of the community in which early Christianity flourished. The central message of the Stoic philosophy was “live according to nature” and nature was identified with reason, and to conform to reason, as it expressed itself in the objective physical laws of the universe, was at the same time to achieve union with the divine. Stoicism entered deeply into Christian social ethics, and as a result it placed all emphasis on the biological and physical aspects of sexual activities and tended to ignore the personal context in which that activity took place. Procreation became the exclusive end and motive of moral sexual activity and thus in dealing with homosexuality Thomas Aquinas argued that the motive for sexual intercourse must be either lust or procreation. And since procreation cannot be the motive in homosexual activities, lust must be the motive. However, it is interesting to note there is no mention in Aquinas of a third possibility—an expression of love.

Aquinas fastens his condemnation of homosexuality to the following chain of thought which so dominates his view of sexuality and its purpose: “The lustful man does not want human generation, but rather venereal pleasure and it should be noted that this pleasure can

be experienced without indulging in acts from which flow human procreation. And this is precisely what is sought in the vice against nature. [This would be the case where] . . . if without any copulation orgasm is had for the purpose of venereal pleasure—[or] if there is copulation but with a member of the same sex, i.e., male with male or female with female.”

Aquinas's reasoning then is that the homosexual indulges in a form of sex that is contrary to the dictates of reason because it is geared to only one end, venereal pleasure, and any practice of it is a clear violation of natural law. But still the homosexual is free to violate this law, although he does it with his face turned to Hell. The Orthodox Church has shown no inclination to deviate from this line of thought.

Aquinas's simplistic deductions about the very nature of sexuality almost rigidly subordinate sexuality to procreation. The inner psychological climate of any homosexual forced to celibacy does not seem important to Aquinas, as he appears to have little appreciation for it.

In the Old Testament an attempt was made to desanctify human sexuality by removing it from the domain of the mysterious impersonal forces of nature, whereas in the New Testament an effort was made to resanctify sexuality by connecting it to the ideal context of free interpersonal love.

There is strong empirical evidence that many true homosexuals, contrary to the general notion that all homosexuals are promiscuous and practise depersonalized sex, enter into mature homosexual relationships with one partner with the intention of fidelity and mutual support. And by means of this relationship they have grown as human beings. They have learned to integrate their sexual powers in a positive way with the result that these powers are no longer a negative, compulsive and destructive force, but an instrument within their command for the expression of genuine human love. The scriptures, most certainly, do not condemn such a relationship. And quite positively in these circumstances such a relationship can be interpreted as fulfilling the positive ideals of the scriptures.

## The Law

In India, homosexuality is a criminal offence under Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code. The law regards it as being against the order of nature. Punishment can range from imprisonment for ten years to life imprisonment. In addition the offender is also liable to fine.

Manu, the author of an important Sanskrit treatise on law—the *Manu Smriti* or the *Manava Dharma Shastra*—an early post-Vedic treatise on legal and allied topics (2nd century B.C.) which gives an outline of civil and criminal law, discusses at length punishments to be meted out to sodomists and lesbians. Manu dictates severe penalties to sodomists. But with lesbians he is even more harsh. He declares that a damsel who pollutes another should be fined 200 panas and to be given ten strokes with the rod. This light punishment applies only if the act is between two adult females, but if an adult woman should dare commit such an offence with a virgin, then the punishment declared is much higher—her head was to be shaved instantly, two of her fingers to be cut off and—as if this were not enough—she should be placed on an ass and paraded through the town.

The present-day criminal law in India is a residue of the British law that was grafted into the Indian law system during the British regime. The Indian Penal Code was enacted in India in 1861. The nucleus of the code, originally drafted by Lord Macaulay was based mainly on the contemporary English law, and Indian courts still frequently consult English decisions to construe sections of the code. While British laws have changed considerably and various sections have been amended to suit the current climate of opinion, the criminal law in India has changed very little. A close examination of the various sections of the Code indicates clearly the

rarity of the Code's coincidence with the criminal laws in force in India prior to 1861.

The British law has been amended in case of homosexual acts between two consenting adults, based on the recommendations of the Wolfenden report prepared in 1957 by the British Committee on homosexual offences and prostitution, under the chairmanship of Sir John Wolfenden. But India has not modified the sections of the Indian Penal Code connected with homosexuality.

The laws pertaining to homosexuality vary from one country to another, and the different legal attitudes of some of the countries towards this subject makes a very interesting study. There are no laws specifically directed against homosexuals in the Mexican Criminal Code. There are laws regarding immoral behaviour—'Faltas a la Moral!' and they are sufficiently vague to admit of application in most circumstances of a sexual—and certainly homosexual—nature. However, penalties are not severe. The maximum penalty is a fine of fifty pesos (Rs 30). But since a scandal could wreck a man's life, the corrupt police generally demands, and usually gets, a substantial bribe to keep the affair out of court. Anyone who wishes to attend a homosexual party must, without fail, keep a few crisp thousand-peso notes in his bill fold. Raids on these parties are not infrequent and if they occurred, one would just have to buy one's way home.

In West Germany, the legal situation regarding homosexuality did not change at all when the Hitler regime was crushed. One commentator put it this way: "The Third Reich never ended for homosexuals." Although the Reichstag had been on the verge of legalizing homosexual acts in 1929, the Nazi seizure of power brought even stricter penalties against homosexuality—and the Fascist law remained on the books till 1969. West Germany's Penal Code reform plan of 1962 iterated verbatim all the Nazi arguments against homosexuality.

Despite their legal oppression, a few homosexuals ventured forth in 1949 and attempted to re-establish the pre-Hitler Scientific-Humanitarian Committee in Frankfurt. The effort failed quickly, as did several other organizations, which would pop-up, come under fire from police and courts, and dive underground. The centre of activity was mainly Hamburg, a liberal city which had tolerated homosexual bars even during the Nazi period. The Society for



Human Rights was formed in Hamburg and affiliated with the International Committee for Sexual Equality of Amsterdam.

Homosexual movements in West Germany continued to lead a touch-and-go existence till the late '60s, when they gradually found a firmer footing. There was also a rapid growth of the International Homophile World Organization, a Hamburg-based group, which established branches in a number of German cities. The popularity of this group was largely due to an increasing self-assertiveness on the part of homosexuals, and a gradual recognition of social change on the part of local authorities.

The International Homophile World Organization remained, however, fundamentally conservative and the brochures it mailed to members of parliament defended homosexuals by citing dimly relevant passages from the United Nations Charter. This movement coincided with the much broader social currents that swept the Christian Democrats from power in 1969. The Social Democrats, who took over power, quickly moved to legalize homosexual acts. But to make certain concessions to the Christian Democrats, they made homosexual acts illegal for men between the ages of 18 and 21. This again was amended, and since 1973, 18 has been set as the age of consent for homosexuals.

However, the movement objects that the new law still singles out homosexual people and demands its total elimination in favour of a law that deals uniformly with hetero and homosexual abuses.

The East German regime repealed the specifically Fascist laws against homosexual acts as soon as it came to power—at a time when they were being upheld by the West German Supreme Court. And following the model of Czechoslovakia and Poland, homosexual acts and abortion were completely legalized in 1968—one year before the West German Government took this step in regard to homosexuality. Abortion is still illegal in West Germany.

In Canada, according to the Criminal Code RSC 1970 chapter 43, sections 155, 157, 158, the Ontario Human Rights Code RSC 1970 chapter 318, any sexual act, if performed in private by two consenting adults is now legal. The legal age of consent between unmarried people is 21, but usually the law does not bother anyone who is over 18. However, if one of the partners is not consenting or is under age, the older person can be charged whether or not she or he is the initiator.

It is interesting to note here, that although these laws apply to everyone, they are usually enforced only against homosexual acts. For instance, in a public place, such as in a park or a bar, when a man and a woman are seen making love, they will be told to go home or to move on, but when a couple of the same sex are seen making love, they will be charged with gross indecency.

It is not illegal to ask someone to go to bed as long as offensive language is not used. It is clearly understood that a private place, for instance a home or a hotel, will be used and no payment will be made. However, one can be charged with indecent assault if a man touches a man between the knee and the navel without his invitation. The same law applies to a woman if she is touched between the knee and the breasts without invitation. But it is difficult for any woman to press a charge on these grounds. Sex in washrooms, parks, or with more than two people present is deemed public.

Those charged with an indictable offence (punishable by more than two years in prison) will be taken to a police station or told to appear the next day, to be fingerprinted and photographed. They will then be released on their own recognizance till the trial date. Whether or not a person is convicted, these records remain on file at the RCMP Headquarters. If a person is convicted of an indictable sexual offence, she or he can be charged with "Vagrancy E" if caught loitering in or about parks, school grounds, or public bathing areas. Theoretically after anyone has served a sentence he or she is free, but in this case there is punishment for life because he or she is now liable to repeated changes for just being in certain areas.

Civil Law is a little more vague as far as homosexuality is concerned. According to the Marriage Act, any two people may marry within the sanction of the law, but it is inferred that the people are of the opposite sex. To get around this, homosexual couples may incorporate themselves, thereby having a legally binding agreement between them. This does not entitle the partners to the lower taxation bracket, or give the other benefits that a male and female couple receive.

Wills can only be contested on the grounds of mental illness. Homosexuality as such is not considered a mental illness in the eyes of the court. However, death taxes are extremely high if the estate has been left to a friend or lover of the same sex, because the law

considers this type of beneficiary to be unrelated and a stranger. If the couple has an incorporation contract, each is entitled to half the estate automatically. A will covers the rest.

Homosexual orientation can be used as grounds for divorce. If children are involved, there usually are complications in terms of custody. The courts tend to look upon homosexuals as immoral and poor examples for children. There is also the belief that a homosexual parent will condition a child to be a homosexual. These attitudes make adoption difficult. A single person may be suitable in every way to be a good parent, but if it is suspected that she or he is homosexual there is usually an automatic refusal of the application.

The Human Rights Code, which lists everyone's basic rights, does not include the words 'sexual orientation'. Therefore a homosexual can be discriminated against in jobs, or in housing situations. In reality, it is difficult to prove discrimination on any ground, but the majority of people think twice before actually discriminating when the Human Rights Code protects people's rights.

The Immigration Act of Canada Sec 5 E & F states that anyone who enters Canada "for the purposes of practising homosexuality, pimping, or prostitution" is excluded entrance and anyone who is subsequently discovered to be a "homosexual, pimp or prostitute" will be deported. Officials seldom ask if a person is a "homosexual, pimp or prostitute," but deportations and denials are carried out under the clause which states that anyone having a criminal record cannot immigrate into Canada.

There is no official law which states that a homosexual cannot be employed by the Government as a civil servant, or as a member of the armed forces. Many homosexuals people are employed in such areas. However, if someone is suspected or found to be homosexually-oriented, that person is considered a security risk. The only reason homosexuals in Government are likely prospects for blackmail is the fact that they will lose their jobs if their sexuality is discovered. Therefore they are security risks. This involved reasoning has caused a lot of unhappiness and confusion for homosexually-oriented individuals.

In the USA homosexuality is legal in all the states. However, some specific homosexual acts are defined as crimes. The law

does not consider it a crime to be sexually attracted and oriented toward members of the same sex. However, the laws defining various common homosexual acts—oral genital contacts, anal intercourse, mutual masturbation—as crimes do not specify the sexes of the participants. These acts are crimes under the laws of most States whether performed by a man and a woman, two men or two women.

The penalties for these offences can be quite severe. But in practice relatively few homosexuals are arrested and convicted under these laws because most homosexual acts are performed in private, and thus they are protected by the search-and-seizure provisions of the US constitution. When an arrest is at all made for a specific homosexual act, the act has usually occurred in a public place—rest room, park, automobile, theatre—and in nine out of ten cases the act is oral-genital contact. Although this offence is often defined as felony, judges in some States have the discretionary power to reduce the charge to a misdemeanour—with the exception in the case of anal intercourse. Usually, for a first offence, the individual convicted of a homosexual act is fined, given a suspended jail sentence, and placed on probation.

However, only a minority of homosexual arrests are made for specific sexual acts. The majority are for solicitation or loitering in public places. The pertinent California Statutes read:

647: Disorderly Conduct Defined—Misdemeanour—Every person who commits any of the following acts shall be guilty of disorderly conduct, a misdemeanor:

(a) Who solicits anyone to engage in or who engages in lewd or dissolute conduct in any public place or in any place open to the public or exposed to public view.

(b) Who loiters in or about any toilet open to the public for the purpose of engaging in soliciting any lewd or lascivious or any unlawful act.

650½: Injuries to persons, property, public peace, health or decency; False personation for lewd purpose—a person who wilfully and wrongfully commits any act which seriously injures the person or property of another, or which seriously disturbs or endangers the public peace or health, or which openly outrages the public decency. . . for which no other punishment is expressly prescribed by this code, is guilty of misdemeanor.

A survey conducted in the Los Angeles area indicated that 90 to 95 per cent of all homosexual arrests were for violations of sections 647(a) of the California Penal Code. But there is a lot of controversy regarding these arrests as the majority are made by the use of policemen as decoys. The pattern of arrest is usually that a young police officer dressed in casual clothes loiters in a public rest room or similar location for the express purpose of enticing homosexuals to solicit "a lewd or lascivious" act. A second police officer who also loiters nearby makes the arrest.

The decoy police officer then serves as a witness against the individual. The controversy revolves round the accusation that the police decoys induce people to commit illegal acts that they would not otherwise commit—which in other words amounts to entrapment. Most certainly the homosexuals would not knowingly solicit police officers, but unfortunately this point is irrelevant under the law. The law takes the view that if an individual has a predisposition to commit a particular offence, it is not illegal for a police officer to entice that person to commit the offence.

Apart from the issue of enticement versus entrapment, there is the question whether or not police decoys serve a useful function and represent a worthwhile investment of police manpower. How far homosexual soliciting constitutes a significant enough offence to public decency is questionable, because most homosexual soliciting that occurs in public places is quite subtle, achieved through certain signals, gestures or brief remarks that have significance only to other homosexuals, or to policemen trained in the jargon of the homosexual world. Hoffman holds the opinion that the putting out as decoys police officers who are young, attractive and seductively dressed, and who engage in enticing conversation with homosexuals is itself an outrage to public decency.

There have been arguments, of course, that the use of police decoys serves to deter public homosexual soliciting. But the argument has been found unconvincing because the express purpose of using decoys is to promote such behaviour in order to achieve arrest, rather than to prevent it.

In states such as Georgia, Kentucky, South Carolina, and Wisconsin, the laws do not distinguish between male and female homosexuals. But in actual practice, females are almost never arrested or prosecuted for homosexual activities. Though the

reasons are poorly substantiated, male homosexuals are regarded as more threatening to society than are lesbians. Police officers hold the opinion that homosexuals are more likely to commit crimes of violence and crimes against juveniles than are lesbians. However, massive studies like those conducted by Gebhard and his associates at the Institute of Six Research have not confirmed this belief.

The Kinsey study that reviewed all the sodomy convictions in the United States from 1696 to 1952 failed to find a single conviction involving lesbians. The Kinsey researchers found, in a review of all the arrests in New York City over a period of ten years, thousands of arrests and convictions of male homosexuals, but only three arrests of females for homosexual offences, and all three cases had been dismissed.

Perhaps one of the factors contributing to this difference in treatment may be that lesbians tend to engage less publicly in sexual behaviour. Generally speaking, lesbian activities are not considered as "sinful" as male homosexual activities. Therefore, the law in general tends to be more protective of female sexual activities—with of course the exception of prostitution.

Convicted homosexual offenders are required to be registered and various States have in their criminal laws provisions such as the following:

290: Person convicted of certain lewd crimes must register with sheriff—Facts to State—Any person who, since the first day of July 1944, has been or is hereafter convicted in the State of California of the offence of assault with intent to commit rape or the infamous crime against nature, under Section 220, or of any offence defined in Sections 266, 267, 268, 285, 286, 288, 288a, subdivision I of Section 647a, subdivision 3 or 4 or Section 261, subdivision (13)(a) or (d) of Section 647, or subdivision 1 or 2 of Section (14) 314 of this code, or of any offence involving lewd and lascivious conduct. . . shall within 30 days after the effective date of this section or within 30 days of his coming into any county or city, or city and county in which he resides or is temporarily domiciled for such length of time register with the chief of police of the city in which he resides in an unincorporated area.

This requirement puts a convicted homosexual in the awkward position of being "picked up for questioning" whenever a sex crime is committed in the area in which he is living.

Homosexuals are generally prohibited from holding jobs that require security clearance or involve the handling of "sensitive information," and this again renders the convicted homosexual susceptible to what is known as "purges" like those in the US State Department and other government agencies that took place in the '50s. These so called purges are not simply based on the idea that "perverts" are unreliable, but also on the belief that homosexuals are more vulnerable to extortion and blackmail.

In the UK, for the first time, English Criminal Law (Amendment) Act which made "indecentcy among males" a crime was passed in 1885. Immediately following this, the famous trials of Oscar Wilde created a sensation in Great Britain and other parts of the world. In more recent times a trial known as the Montagu Case in Great Britain in 1954 caused a furor. Peter Wildeblood, a diplomatic correspondent of *The Daily Mail* of London was involved, and sentenced to 18 months imprisonment for homosexual offences.

The Montagu Case was the subject of considerable controversy and was largely responsible for the Government's decision to set up a committee to inquire into the question of homosexuality and the laws relating to it. The committee, headed by Sir John Wolfenden, generally known as the Wolfenden Committee, based on a ten-year study, issued what is known as the Wolfenden Report, a document which has been widely discussed and has had much influence toward legalizing homosexual behaviour in Great Britain. The crucial arguments and recommendations of the Wolfenden report, its formulation on morality and the law in respect of homosexual matters merits consideration in the wider sphere. Therefore the relevant extracts from the report are reproduced below:

In considering whether homosexual acts between consenting adults in private should cease to be criminal offences we have examined the more serious arguments in favour of retaining them as such. We now set out these arguments and our reasons for disagreement with them. In favour of retaining the present law, it has been contended that homosexual behaviour between adult mates, in private no less than in public, is contrary to the

public good on the grounds that—(i) it menaces the health of society; (ii) it has damaging effects on family life; and (iii) a man who indulges in these practices with another man may turn his attention to boys.

As regards the first of these arguments, it is held that conduct of this kind is a cause of the demoralization and decay of civilizations, and that therefore, unless we wish to see our nation degenerate and decay, such conduct must be stopped by every possible means. We have found no evidence to support this view, and we cannot feel it right to frame the laws which should govern this country in the present age by reference to hypothetical explanations of the history of other peoples in ages distant in time and different in circumstances from our own.

Insofar as the basis of this argument can be precisely formulated, it is often no more than the expression of revulsion against what is regarded as unnatural, sinful or disgusting. Many people feel this revulsion, for one or more of these reasons. But moral conviction or instinctive feeling, however strong, is not a valid basis for overriding the individual's privacy and for bringing within the ambit of the criminal law private sexual behaviour of this kind.

It is held also that if such men are employed in certain professions or certain branches of the public service their private habits may render them liable to threats of blackmail or to other pressures which may make them 'bad security risks'. If this is true, it is true also of some other categories of person: for example, drunkards, gamblers and those who become involved in compromising situations of a heterosexual kind; and while it may be a valid ground for excluding from certain forms of employment men who indulge in homosexual behaviour, it does not, in our view, constitute a sufficient reason for making their private sexual behaviour an offence in itself.

The second contention, that homosexual behaviour between males has a damaging effect on family life, may well be true. Indeed, we have had evidence that it often is; cases in which homosexual behaviour on the part of the husband has broken up a marriage are by no means rare, and there are also cases in which a man in whom the homosexual component is relatively weak nevertheless derives such satisfaction from homosexual

outlets that he does not enter upon a marriage which might have been successfully and happily consummated. We deplore this damage to what we regard as the basic unit of society . . . .

We have had no reasons shown to us which would lead us to believe that homosexual behaviour between males inflicts any greater damage on family life than adultery, fornication or lesbian behaviour. These practices are all reprehensible from the point of view of harm to the family, but it is difficult to see why on this ground male homosexual behaviour alone among them should be a criminal offence.

We have given anxious consideration to the third argument, that an adult male who has sought as his partner another adult male may turn from such a relationship and seek as his partner a boy or succession of boys. We should certainly not wish to countenance any proposal which might tend to increase offences against minors.

We are authoritatively informed that a man who has homosexual relations with an adult partner seldom turns to boys, and vice versa, though it is apparent from the police reports we have seen and from other evidence submitted to us that such cases do happen.

In addition, an argument of a more general character in favour of retaining the present law has been put to us by some of our witnesses. It is that to change the law in such a way that homosexual acts between consenting adults in private ceased to be criminal offences must suggest to the average citizen a degree of toleration by the Legislature of homosexual behaviour, and that such a change would open the floodgates and result in unbridled licence. It is true that a change of this sort would amount to a limited degree of such toleration, but we do not share the fears of our witnesses that the change would have the effect they expect. This expectation seems to us to exaggerate the effect of the law on human behaviour.

It may well be true that the present law deters from homosexual acts some who would otherwise commit them, and to that extent an increase in homosexual behaviour can be expected. But it is no less true that if the amount of homosexual behaviour has, in fact, increased in recent years, then the law has failed to act as an effective deterrent. It seems to us that the law itself

probably makes little difference to the amount of homosexual behaviour which actually occurs: whatever the law may be there will always be strong social forces opposed to homosexual behaviour.

It is highly improbable that the man to whom homosexual behaviour is repugnant would find it any less repugnant because the law permitted it in certain circumstances; so that even if, as has been suggested to us, homosexuals tend to proselytize, there is no valid reason for supposing that any considerable number of conversions would follow the change in the law.

We recognize that a proposal to change a law which has operated for many years so as to make legally permissible acts which were formerly unlawful, is open to criticisms which might not be made in relation to a proposal to omit, from a code of laws being formulated *de novo*, any provision making these acts illegal. To reverse a long-standing tradition is a serious matter and not to be suggested lightly. But the task entrusted to us, as we conceive it, is to state what we regard as just and equitable law. We therefore do not think it appropriate that consideration of this question should be unduly influenced by a regard for the present law, much of which derives from traditions whose origins are obscure.

Further, we feel bound to say this. We have outlined the arguments against a change in the law, and we recognize their weight. We believe, however, that they have been met by the counter-arguments we have already advanced. There remains one additional counter-argument which we believe to be decisive, namely, the importance which society and the law ought to give to individual freedom of choice and action in matters of private morality. Unless a deliberate attempt is to be made by society, acting through the agency of the law, to equate the sphere of crime with that of sin, there must remain a realm of private morality and immorality which is, in brief and crude terms, not the law's business.

To say this is not to condone or encourage private immorality. On the contrary, to emphasize the personal and private nature of moral or immoral conduct is to emphasize the personal and private responsibility of the individual for his own actions, and that is a responsibility which a mature agent can properly be

expected to carry for himself without the threat of punishment from the law.

We accordingly recommend that homosexual behaviour between consenting adults in private should no longer be a criminal offence.

The laws of many countries in Europe—France, Belgium, West Germany, the Scandinavian countries and Great Britain—are based on the principles recommended in the Wolfenden Report. Certain states in the United States, the Soviet Union and India remain some of the few countries that still have strict proscriptions against homosexual acts.

## 6

### Psychiatric Perspectives on Homosexuality

Till recently, psychiatry never wavered from the judgement that homosexual behaviour resulted from a pathological sidetrack in the psycho-sexual development of a normal human being. But on 15 December 1973, the American Psychiatric Association's 13-member board of trustees voted unanimously to remove homosexuality from the category of mental illness. The new official definition uses the term "sexual orientation disturbance" for "individuals who are either disturbed by, in conflict with, or wish to change, their sexual orientation." The trustees further stated that "the diagnostic category is distinguished from homosexuality, which in itself does not necessarily constitute psychiatric disorder."

This decision by the American Psychiatric Association was a response to the growing body of scientific study which refutes the traditional evaluation of homosexuality as a disease. Within the mental health profession itself the disease theory is losing ground. One recent survey found that only 41 per cent of experts still subscribe to the idea that homosexuality is a sickness. 90 per cent felt that the public has been seriously misled by that label in the past. Perhaps also significantly 54 per cent of all psychiatrists still cling to the sickness view compared to only 28 per cent of psychologists. Very serious inconsistencies, contradictions, and a lack of statistically sound evidence have made it very difficult for these people to accept the old "disease theories."

The generally accepted theory of the nature of homosexuality began with Freud. Though his theory has served as a model for the psychiatric profession for more than half a century, Freud never presented a full theory on the nature of homosexuality. He said different things at different times, and he did not bother to tidy either the loose ends or the contradictory implications.

*Freud viewed homosexuality as essentially caused by constitutional*

factors and also as a perversion. He saw little hope for "curing" the condition through therapy. He believed that perversion was the antithesis of neurosis. A perversion meant that the person "acted out" his sexual drives and therefore was untreatable. Freudian psychoanalysis was mainly designed to treat neuroses in which sexual drives were inhibited or repressed. However, most analysts today view homosexuality in terms of a neurosis or character disorder. They, therefore, consider it treatable.

Freud's hypotheses were dutifully incorporated in the thinking and practice of many of his disciples and his largely unproved and undocumented assumptions made it inevitable that later psychiatrists would add to, subtract from, and modify the master's ideas.

The following are among the leading modern authorities on homosexuality who subscribe to the "mental illness" theory, more or less based on Freud. Lionel Ovesey is of the Columbia Psychoanalytic school. He sees homosexuality as an "adaptation" to sexual inhibition or fear of normal heterosexual functioning. He opines that to such an inhibited person the choice of homosexuality seems safer and allows him to cope with his anxiety. In broadening the concept of homosexuality he coined the term "pseudo-homosexual" to describe individuals in whom the predominating dynamics of homosexual behaviour was not inherently sexual, but had to do with power and dependency.

Clara Thompson was director of the William A. White Institute of Psychiatry in New York City till her death in 1958. She viewed homosexuality as a symptom of various underlying non-sexual problems such as fear of adult responsibility, a need to defy authority, an attempt to cope with hatred for, or extreme competitiveness with members of one's own sex, or a child's awareness that his or her parents would have preferred a child of the opposite sex.

Irving Beiber of New York City, conducted the best known United States study of homosexuals in 1962. Along with nine associates connected with New York Medical College, Beiber compiled data on 106 homosexual patients, compared to a control group of 100 non-homosexual patients. He found many distinct patterns in the family backgrounds of the homosexual group. The most common pattern, he reported, involved an over-protective, over-binding mother and a detached, absent or brutal father. Beiber

concludes on the basis of his studies that if there is a warm, affectionate, good relationship between father and son, homosexuality cannot occur.

Charles Socarides is also of New York City. He is a practising psychiatrist who has treated many homosexuals in private practice. He claims that fear of "engulfment" by the dominant mother is the key factor preventing the boy from becoming independent and progressing to heterosexuality. Socarides believes the boy's failure to separate from his mother, which points him towards homosexuality, occurs in the preoedipal phase—between the ages of 2 and 5.

Lawrence Hatterer of Cornell University agrees with Beiber and Socarides. He agrees that homosexuality is a "curable" disorder, but in his studies of hundreds of male homosexual patients, he found many other cases of male homosexuality besides family influences. Where he diverges from Freud and many of Freud's disciples is in his theory of "hyper-sexualized consciousness," apart from oedipal and castration complexes, through which the homosexual views every aspect of his life in sexual terms.

Hatterer speaks of trigger mechanisms that cause homo-erotic responses. These triggers include environmental stimuli such as homosexual friends or milieus, imagery of past homosexual contacts, or dreams during or preceding masturbation. Hatterer also believes that the homosexual, through his sexual contacts, is searching for the maleness that he feels he lacks. By possessing the idealized male erotically, in Hatterer's view, the homosexual identifies with or incorporates this virile ideal into his own self-image.

Very few studies have been done about female homosexuality—although the incidence of lesbianism is estimated to range from half that of male homosexuality to about equal. Psychiatrists have seen very few lesbians who go to them for therapy. It is not known why so few lesbians compared to male homosexuals should seek psychiatric treatment. Most researchers on homosexuality—Beiber, Hatterer, Socarides, Ovesey and others—have confined their clinical research on homosexuality for many years exclusively with males. And almost all their published works relate only to male homosexuality.

The scanty information available on female homosexuality written predominantly by male psychoanalysts emphasizes disturbances in the mother-child relationship, and as a secondary factor

poor relations with the father. Helme Deutsch, a leading psychoanalyst, who has worked extensively with female homosexuals advances the theory that a girl who hates or resents her mother could feel so guilty about competing for her father that she would masochistically attach herself to her mother and renounce men, both to appease her own guilt feelings and to win her mother's love. Deutsch also holds the opinion that women who denigrate their husbands or other men, or who regard men in general as evil, brutal or frightening can make it difficult for their daughters to relate to men.

Most of these theories, particularly those relating to female homosexuality have been based on narrow and inconclusive studies, but yet they have been generally accepted and have remained unchallenged for far too long. None of these theories explain homosexuality satisfactorily or prove that it is a mental illness.

The only point on which the "illness" theorists seem to agree upon is that homosexuality is a disorder "in function," but they widely vary in their views about when and how the "dysfunction" occurs and what causes it. While every "illness" theorist has implicated parent-child relationship in the fostering of homosexuality, some point to the mother who is seductive, close-binding and engulfing, and others blame a mother who is too aloof or "castrating" to the boy or to her husband. Here again the "illness" theorists disagree.

When such conflicting theories are advanced to explain homosexuality, and besides, when most of these theories are based on studies of psychiatric patients rather than the general population, we are bound to question the illness-theory itself. There are other scholars on the subject, like Judd Marmor, who point out that many families which seem to fit the classic homosexual producing model, produce "straight" children, and many totally different families produce homosexual children. This is the paradox. How can one not hold a sceptical view of all the explanations? And there are other questions that are usually raised, which the psychiatrists have failed to answer satisfactorily—how can the psychiatrists, who see only a small number of disturbed homosexuals, reach conclusions about all homosexuals, when the vast majority do not come in for treatment?

Wendell, Reiter, Ovesev, Hatterer and others who follow the

Freudian school of thought, may have seen an aggregate total of many thousand homosexual patients, but none of them has ever done control studies comparing his homosexual patients with non-patient homosexuals, or comparing non-patient heterosexuals with non-patient homosexuals.

However, psychologists have done a study using control groups on the relationship between homosexuality and psychological functioning. Here is a summary of their research studies:

Summary of research studies (using control groups) on the relationship between homosexuality and psychological functioning

<i>Researcher and date of publication</i>	<i>Results</i>
Hooker (1957)	No significant differences were found between the number of homosexuals and heterosexuals having an adjustment rating of normal or better. (Two-thirds of each group were assigned an adjustment rating of normal or better.)
Liddicott (1957)	The homosexual group did not reveal any evidence of trends toward a psychopathic personality. A few highly neurotic individuals were found in both the experimental and control groups.
Armon (1960)	The majority of the homosexual women were as well-functioning as the members of the control group.
Chang and Block (1960)	The two groups of subjects did not differ significantly in their degree of self-acceptance or in regard to the kind of ego ideal toward which they aspired.
Dodge and Holzman (1960)	Only the markedly homosexual group gave evidence of disturbance; the partly homosexual group gave test results that closely approximated the results of the heterosexual control groups.
Dean and Richardson (1964)	Homosexual subjects at a high level of intelligence and effective functioning are very similar to the test performance of a comparable heterosexual group, both groups being in the normal range in test performance.
Deluca (1966)	On the Rorschach, the homosexuals varied as much from each other as from the controls. There seems to be no casual relationship between homosexuality and pathological functioning.



Miller (1966)	No significant differences were found in rated psychological adjustment between incarcerated women who engaged in homosexual activities and those who did not.
Schofield (1966)	The differences in psychological functioning between homosexual and heterosexual groups were very small.
Freedman (1967)	Homosexual-oriented women were as well-functioning, or better functioning, than a group of heterosexually-oriented women.
Hopkins (1969)	In place of "neurotic," other, more positive terms were suggested as descriptive of the homosexually-oriented women studied.
Saghir, et al. (1970 a)	Homosexually-oriented men compared favourably with heterosexually-oriented ones and were seen as functioning well, despite slightly greater 'disability' and life changes.
Saghir, et al. (1970 b)	Homosexually-oriented women studied were able to achieve, adapt, and be productive citizens, and were only slightly more disturbed than the heterosexual control group.

Judd Marmor, a Los Angeles psychiatrist and former Vice-president of the American Psychiatric Association, has long been an advocate of the move to reconsider homosexuality and to stop calling it a disorder. Marmor discounts the disturbed-family theory on the ground that many homosexuals come from families that did not conform to the classic homosexual-producing type, and conversely, that many non-homosexuals had similar childhoods to these types, yet grew up heterosexual.

Marmor also defends homosexuality as falling within the biological norm for mammals and cites the work of the comparative psychologist Frank Beach, whose work indicates that bisexuality occurs naturally in many mammalian species besides man. Finally, Marmor charges that a happy, socially well-adjusted homosexual cannot be called pathological on the ground that his or her sex life differs from the socially accepted norm.

The Kinsey study (1948) represented the first departure from the illness theory of homosexuality. Although Kinsey's work was concerned mainly with incidence, he also discussed the social and scientific implications of his findings. The following is an excerpt

from his discussion:

In view of the data which we now have on the incidence and frequency of the homosexual, and in particular on its co-existence with the heterosexual in the lives of a considerable portion of the male population, it is difficult to maintain the view that psycho-sexual reactions between individuals of the same sex are rare and therefore abnormal or unnatural, or that they constitute within themselves evidence of neuroses or even psychoses.

If homosexual activity persists on as large a scale as it does, in the face of the very considerable public sentiment against it and in spite of the severity of the penalties that our Anglo-American culture has placed upon it through the centuries, there seems some reason for believing that such activity would appear in the histories of a much larger portion of the population if there were no social restraints.

The very general occurrence of the homosexual in ancient Greece (Licht, 1925, 1926, 1928, 1932), and its wide occurrence today in some cultures in which such activity is not as taboo as it is in our own, suggests that the capacity of an individual to respond erotically to any sort of stimulus, whether it is provided by another person of the same or of the opposite sex, is basic in the species.

That patterns of heterosexuality and patterns of homosexuality represent learned behaviour which depends, to a considerable degree, upon the mores of the particular culture in which the individual is raised, is a possibility that must be thoroughly considered before there can be any acceptance of the idea that homosexuality is inherited, and that the pattern for each individual is so innately fixed that no modifications of it may be expected within his lifetime.

The opinion that homosexual activity in itself provides evidence of a psychopathic personality is materially challenged by these incidences and frequency data. Of the 40 or 50 per cent of the male population which has homosexual experience, certainly a high proportion would not be considered psychopathic personalities on the basis of anything else in their histories. It is argued that an individual who is so obtuse to social reactions as to continue his homosexual activity and make it any material

portion of his life, therein evidences some social incapacity; but psychiatrists and clinicians in general might very well re-examine their justification for demanding that all persons conform to particular patterns of behaviour. As a matter of fact, there is an increasing proportion of the most skilled psychiatrists who make no attempt to re-direct behaviour, but who devote their attention to helping an individual accept himself, and to conduct himself in such a manner that he does not come into open conflict with society.

Whatever factors are considered, it must not be forgotten that the basic phenomenon to be explained is an individual's preference for a partner of one sex, or for a partner of the other sex, or his acceptance of a partner of either sex.

This problem is, after all, part of the broader problem of choices in general: the choice of the road that one takes, of the clothes that one wears, of the food that one eats, of the place in which one sleeps, and of the endless other things that one is constantly choosing. A choice of a partner in a sexual relation becomes more significant only because society demands that there be a particular choice in this matter, and does not so often dictate one's choice of food or of clothing.

The evidence that we now have on the incidence and frequency of homosexual activity indicates that at least a third of the male population would have to be isolated from the rest of the community, if all those with any homosexual capacities were to be so treated. It means that at least 13 per cent of the male population (rating 4 to 6 on the heterosexual-homosexual scale), would have to be institutionalized and isolated, if all persons who were predominantly homosexual were to be handled in that way. Since about 34 per cent of the total population of the United States are adult males, this means that there are about six and a third million males in the country who would need such isolation.

If all persons with any trace of homosexual history, or those who were predominantly homosexual, were eliminated from the population today, there is no reason for believing that the incidence of the homosexual in the next generation would be materially reduced. The homosexual has been a significant part of human sexual activity ever since the dawn of history, primarily

because it is an expression of capacities that are basic in the human animal.

The years since Kinsey's report have seen the growth of a new school of thought about homosexuality among mental health researchers. Many view homosexuality as a normal variant in the total spectrum of human sexuality.

In 1956 Dr Evelyn Hooker, a West Coast psychologist who headed the National Institute of Mental Health's task force on homosexuality, submitted the results of psychiatric tests on 30 normal, overt male homosexuals and a comparable group of heterosexuals to a panel of experts on each of the tests used. Not only could the panel find no difference of degree of adjustment between the two, but when the results for each homosexual subject were paired with those for one of the straights and resubmitted, even the psychiatrists and psychologists were unable to tell which of the volunteers were homosexual and which heterosexual.

The repeats of this study have been numerous, with homosexuals undergoing almost every test known to psychiatry. The most notable is that recently done under the direction of the educational psychologist Marvin Siegelman of New York. His subjects included homosexual teachers, artists, physicians, business executives, musicians, college students and cooks, to name but a few of the professions represented. This group was matched with heterosexuals similar in background educationally and socio-economically. Not only were there "no significant differences in terms of alienation, trust, dependency and neuroticism," but the homosexuals actually scored better than the straights on four separate measures of personal adjustment, self-acceptance, goal-directedness, sense of self, and nurturance.

June Hopkins, in another British study, matched 24 female heterosexuals with 24 female homosexuals on the basis of age, education, and intelligence. After administering a detailed series of personality tests, she found the homosexuals as psychologically healthy as the heterosexuals. Her findings were quickly challenged by a psychiatric team from the Mayo Clinic. Preferring to accept the "lesbian characteristics" listed by the British psychiatrist F.E. Kenyon, they took a somewhat different research approach, and eliminated the normal homosexuals, and instead chose lesbians

from their files on female psychiatric patients and then compared these to heterosexual women who had also sought aid for emotional problems.

The lesbians thus selected did match, to some extent, Kenyon's characteristics. But they were also found to be similar to women psychiatric patients in general. All the women complained most frequently of fear or hopelessness. Extensive evidence of family disorganization and conflict occurred with equal frequency in both groups. The researchers were finally forced to conclude that the lesbian who seeks psychiatric treatment is similar to any other troubled female patient. The conflict over homosexuality is only one factor, and not a primary one, that caused the patient to seek treatment.

Lately, Marvin Sigelman has been trying just as hard to answer those questions for the female as he did for the male homosexual. After sampling a wider section of the female homosexual community than just psychiatric patients, he found that female homosexuality does indeed seem to be the mirror-image of homosexuality in the male. Not because their "pathologies" are similar, but by virtue of the fact that both seem to adjust particularly well in some respects, perhaps as a result of being forced to come to grips with the social conflicts arising from their sexual orientation. The lesbians scored consistently lower than the heterosexual control group on depression, higher on self-acceptance and "total neuroticism." Heterosexual women were found to be more generally tense and excitable than lesbians. These results matched the findings originally published by June Hopkins.

Dr George Weinberg, a practising psychotherapist and author of *Society and the Healthy Homosexual* isolates not homosexuality, but homophobia (the fear of homosexuality) as the true ailment in our society. He delineates the problems which this phobia creates in our society.

Thomas Szasz, Professor of Psychiatry at New York State University, an outstanding practitioner and the foremost contemporary critic of psychiatric abuses, is deeply concerned about the Mental Health Movement's threat to individual rights. He considers homosexuality a natural form of human sexual expression and characterizes the psychiatric attitude toward the homosexual as scape-goating. Other mental health researchers who subscribe to

the view that homosexuality is a normal sexual variant include Simon and Gangnon, Freedman, Saghir et al., Van den Haag, Ruitenbeek, Halleck and Dr John Money.

7

## Homosexual-Heterosexual Balance

"It is one thing," wrote Alfred Kinsey in 1948, "if we are dealing with a type of activity that is unusual, without precedent among other animals, and restricted to peculiar types of individuals within the human population. It is another if the phenomenon proves to be a fundamental part, not only of human sexuality, but all mammalian patterns as a whole." Kinsey was referring to homosexuality, which, whatever it is, is apparently none of the things it was always assumed to be.

When *Sexual Behaviour in the Human Male* was published in 1948, it elicited a tremendous reaction of disbelief and hostility, particularly in response to the studies on homosexuality. It was the first large-scale, thoroughly scientific statistical study of human sexual behaviour ever conducted. Everyone was shocked to discover the facts revealed about an area of human activity which has been a subject largely unspoken about in our sexually repressive human culture. Homosexuality has always been considered taboo—the crime without a name—because it was considered too painful to mention. Even Kinsey and his colleagues had difficulties at first in accepting their data:

We ourselves were totally unprepared to find such incidence data when this research was originally undertaken. Over a period of several years we were repeatedly assailed with doubts as to whether we are getting a fair cross-section of the total population or whether a selection of cases was biasing the results. It has been our experience however that each new group into which we have gone has provided substantially the same data. . . . While the validity of the data on all of the sexual outlets has been tested and retested throughout the study, especial attention has been given to testing the material on the homosexual.

However, challenges to the validity of the statistics have never succeeded and they remain the most accurate study of the incidence of homosexuality in human society. The Kinsey Report represents a turning point in the attitude towards sexual matters generally, and homosexuality in particular. The research indicated that traditional conceptions of human sexual nature were entirely unrealistic, more the product of repressive cultural influences than any real understanding of human sexuality. The statistics on homosexual-heterosexual activity were particularly incongruous with traditional conceptions. The following are some important observations made in *Sexual Behaviour in the Human Male*:

Concerning patterns of sexual behaviour, a great deal of the thinking done by scientists and laymen alike stems from the assumption that there are persons who are 'heterosexual' and persons who are 'homosexual', that these two types represent antitheses in the sexual world, and that there is only an insignificant class of 'bisexuals' who occupy an intermediate position between the other groups. It is implied that every individual is innately—inherently—either heterosexual or homosexual. It is further implied that from the time of birth one is fated to be one thing or the other, and that there is little chance for one to change his pattern in the course of a lifetime.

It is quite generally believed that one's preference for a sexual partner of one or the other sex is correlated with various physical and mental qualities, and with the total personality which makes a homosexual male or female physically, and perhaps spiritually distinct from a heterosexual individual. It is generally thought that these qualities make a homosexual person obvious and recognizable to anyone who has a sufficient understanding of such matters. Even psychiatrists discuss 'the homosexual personality' and many of them believe that preferences for sexual partners of a particular sex are merely secondary manifestations of something that lies much deeper in the totality of that intangible which they call the personality.

It should be pointed out that scientific judgements on this point have been based on little more than the same sorts of impressions which the general public has had concerning homosexual persons. But before any sufficient study can be made of

such possible correlations between patterns of sexual behaviour and other qualities in the individual, it is necessary to understand the incidences and frequencies of the homosexual in the population as a whole, and the relation of the homosexual activity to the rest of the sexual pattern in each individual's history.

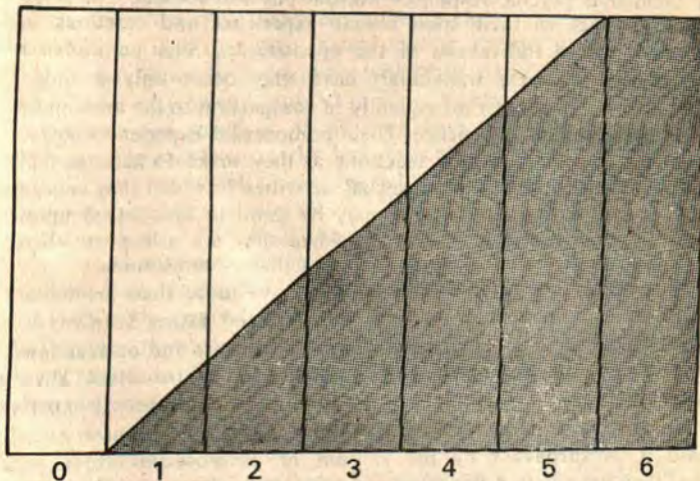
The histories which have been available in the present study make it apparent that the heterosexuality or homosexuality of many individuals is not an all-or-none proposition. It is true that there are persons in the population whose histories are exclusively heterosexual, both in regard to their overt experience and in regard to their psychic reactions. And there are individuals in the population whose histories are exclusively homosexual, both in experience and in psychic reactions. But the record also shows that there is a considerable portion of the population whose members have combined, within their individual histories, both homosexual and heterosexual experience and/or psychic responses. There are some whose heterosexual experiences predominate, there are some whose homosexual experiences predominate, and there are some who have had quite equal amounts of both types of experience.

Some of the males who are involved in one type of relation at one period in their lives, may have only the other type of relation at some later period. There may be considerable fluctuation of patterns from time to time. Some males may be involved in both heterosexual and homosexual activities within the same period of time. For instance, there are some who engage in both heterosexual and homosexual activities in the same year, or in the same month or week, or even in the same day. There are not a few individuals who engage in group activities in which they may make simultaneous contact with partners of both sexes.

Males do not represent two discrete populations, heterosexual and homosexual. The world is not to be divided into sheep and goats. Not all things are black nor all things white. It is a fundamental or taxonomy that nature rarely deals with discrete categories. Only the human mind invents categories and tries to force facts into separated pigeon-holes. The living world is a continuum in each and every one of its aspects. The sooner we learn this concerning human sexual behaviour the sooner we shall reach a sound understanding of the realities of sex.

While emphasizing the continuity of the gradations between exclusively heterosexual and exclusively homosexual histories, it has seemed desirable to develop some sort of classification which could be based on the relative amounts of heterosexual and of

FIGURE I



homosexual experience or response in each history. Such a heterosexual-homosexual rating scale is shown in Figure I. An individual may be assigned a position on this scale, for each age period in his life, in accordance with the following definitions of the various points on the scale:

0. Exclusively heterosexual with no homosexual.
1. Predominantly heterosexual, only incidentally homosexual.
2. Predominantly heterosexual, but more than incidentally homosexual.
3. Equally heterosexual and homosexual.
4. Predominantly homosexual, but more than incidentally heterosexual.
5. Predominantly homosexual, but incidentally heterosexual.
6. Exclusively homosexual.

Individuals are rated as 0's if they make no physical contacts which result in erotic arousal or orgasm, and make no psychic

responses to individuals of their own sex. Their socio-sexual contacts and responses are exclusively with individuals of the opposite sex.

Individuals are rated as 1's if they have only incidental homosexual contact which have involved physical or psychic responses, or incidental psychic responses without physical contact. The great preponderance of their socio-sexual experience and reactions is directed toward individuals of the opposite sex. Such homosexual experiences as these individuals have may occur only a single time or two, or at least infrequently in comparison to the amount of their heterosexual experience. Their homosexual experiences never involve as specific psychic reactions as they make to heterosexual stimuli. Sometimes the homosexual activities in which they engage may be inspired by curiosity, or may be more or less forced upon them by other individuals, perhaps when they are asleep or when they are drunk, or under some other peculiar circumstances.

Individuals are rated as 2's if they have more than incidental homosexual experience, and/or if they respond rather definitely to homosexual stimuli. Their heterosexual experience and/or reactions still surpass their homosexual experiences and/or reactions. These individuals may have only a small amount of homosexual experience or they may have a considerable amount of it, but in every case it is surpassed by the amount of heterosexual experience that they have within the same period of time. They usually recognize their quite specific arousal by homosexual stimuli, but their responses to the opposite sex are still stronger. A few of these individuals may even have all of their overt experience in the homosexual, but their psychic reactions to persons of the opposite sex indicate that they are still predominantly heterosexual.

This latter situation is most often found among younger males who have not yet ventured to have actual intercourse with girls, while their orientation is definitely heterosexual. On the other hand, there are some males who should be rated as 2's because of their strong reactions to individuals of their own sex, even though they have never had overt relations with them.

Individuals who are rated 3's stand midway on the heterosexual-homosexual scale. They are about equally homosexual and heterosexual in their overt experience and/or their psychic reactions. In general, they accept and equally enjoy both types of

contacts, and have no strong preferences for one or the other. Some persons are rated 3's, even though they may have a large amount of experience of one sort, because they respond psychically to partners of both sexes, and it is only a matter of circumstance that brings them into more frequent contact with one of the sexes. Such a situation is not unusual among single males, for male contacts are often more available to them than female contacts. Married males, on the other hand, find it simpler to secure a sexual outlet through intercourse with their wives, even though some of them may be as interested in males as they are in females.

Individuals are rated as 4's if they have more overt activity and/or psychic reactions in the homosexual, while still maintaining a fair amount of heterosexual activity and/or responding rather definitely to heterosexual stimuli.

Individuals are rated 5's if they are almost entirely homosexual in their overt activities and/or reactions. They do have incidental experience with the opposite sex and sometimes react psychically to individuals of the opposite sex.

Individuals are rated as 6's if they are exclusively homosexual, both in regard to their overt experience and in regard to their psychic reactions.

It will be observed that the rating which an individual receives has a dual basis. It takes into account his overt sexual experience and/or his psycho-sexual reactions. In the majority of instances the two aspects of the history parallel, but sometimes they are not in accord. In the latter case, the rating of an individual must be based upon an evaluation of the relative importance of the overt and the psychic in his history.

In each classification there are persons who have had no experience or a minimum of overt sexual experience, but in the same classification there may also be persons who have had hundreds of sexual contacts. In every case, however, all of the individuals in each classification show the same balance between the heterosexual and homosexual elements in their histories. The position of an individual on this scale is always based upon the relation of the heterosexual to the homosexual in his history, rather than upon the actual amount of overt experience or psychic reaction.

From all of this, it becomes obvious that any question as to the number of persons in the world who are homosexual and the

number who are heterosexual is unanswerable. It is only possible to record the number of those who belong to each of the positions on such a heterosexual-homosexual scale as is given above. Summarizing our data on the incidence of overt homosexual experience in the white male population and the distribution of various degrees of heterosexual-homosexual balance in that population the following generalizations may be made.

37 per cent of the total male population has at least some overt homosexual experience to the point of orgasm between adolescence and old age. This accounts for nearly 2 males out of every 5 that one may meet.

50 per cent of the males who remain single until age 35 have had overt homosexual experience to the point of orgasm, since the onset of adolescence.

13 per cent of males (approximately) react erotically to other males without having overt homosexual contacts after the onset of adolescence.

25 per cent of the male population has more than incidental homosexual experience or reactions (i.e. rates 2-6) for at least three years between the ages of 16 and 55. In terms of averages, one male out of approximately every four has had or will have such distinct and continued homosexual experience.

18 per cent of males have at least as much of the homosexual as the heterosexual in their histories (i.e. rate 3-6) for at least three years between the ages of 16 and 55. This is more than one in six of the white male population.

13 per cent of the population has more of the homosexual than the heterosexual (i.e. rates 4-6) for at least three years between the ages of 16 and 55. This is one in eight of the white male population.

10 per cent of males are more or less exclusively homosexual (i.e. rate 5-6) for at least three years between the ages of 16 and 55. This is one male in ten in the white male population.

8 per cent of males are exclusively homosexual (i.e. rate a 6) for at least three years between the ages of 16 and 55. This is one male in every 13.

4 per cent of white males are exclusively homosexual throughout their lives, after the onset of adolescence.

## 8

## Homosexuality in Prisons

In many, perhaps most penal institutions, homosexuality is an accepted way of life. The reason is very obvious and quite natural. Whenever the sexes are segregated over any protracted period of time, homosexuality crops up.

Says a scholar who has done considerable study on the subject of homosexuality in prisons: "Set one hundred heterosexual men down on a deserted island and within a week, a quarter of this number will become active homosexuals. The percentage would probably rise to as high as fifty per cent within a short period, and if continued over any long period, we would have a completely and exclusively homosexual society."

One woman prisoner I interviewed in Canada told me the following story:

I was busted [arrested] for boosting [shoplifting] and pulled a 1 to 10 jolt [the name of the prison]. If you think I wasn't wised up in a hurry, you're crazy. The screw [guards] were at least seventyfive per cent dykes [lesbians]. The warden was a lesbian. Everywhere you looked and turned, another butch [masculine type of lesbian]. Hell it doesn't take too long to find out that the second in command in your section is not only a fellow inmate, but also a fellow—if you know what I mean. And she can make life plenty rough on you, if she happens to like you and you won't come across. After a while it wears you down. Give in or go under. You go under.

This pretty much applies to all penal institutions the world over. Most prison staff, however, are reluctant to discuss matters so embarrassing to them. They are, of course, aware of the homosexual

behaviour in their institutions. They don't like it. They can do little to control it. And they would rather not know about it.

Sir Lionel Fox, former Commissioner of the Prison Commissioners, wrote a standard textbook on the subject. *The English Prison and the Borstal System*. He states, "The problems of homosexuality in prisons are patent to all familiar with prison life."

But he did not go into details. There are, however, many books by ex-prisoners that give a more frank and vivid picture.

The sober, factual accounts given by Anthony Heckstall Smith in his book *Eighteen Months* throws light on the impact of prison life on sexually normal men. He depicts a very sordid picture of the sexual habits of youths in Borstals and their addiction to dormitory orgies.

These revelations do not come as a surprise, since most prison inmates are fit young men and women with pressing sexual urges which they are not accustomed to suppress. And their only possible outlets during imprisonment are solitary masturbation or homosexuality.

V.F. Nelson, an ex-prisoner, in his *Prison Days and Nights* says: "To the man dying of hunger and thirst it makes little difference that the available food and water is tainted. Likewise it makes no difference to the average prisoner that the only means of sexual gratification is abnormal."

Homosexuality in prisons has been well studied and documented with statistics in the United States. One of the best accounts is by J.F. Fishman, a one-time Inspector of Prisons, in his book *Sex in Prison: Revealing Sex Conditions in American Prisons* which was published in 1934. He explains how the impersonal discipline with no outlet for affection, the bar on all contact with the opposite sex, the enforced idleness, the perpetual salacious talk, and the loss of self-respect and normal social standards, all conspire to create sexual tension and to foster homosexual habits.

Men who were homosexual before they came to prison, especially the "effeminate" types, who were already street nuisances and often found their way to the prison, aggravate the situation by proffering themselves shamelessly to all and sundry. Handsome young men find themselves in a position to take advantage of the situation and gain money or favours in return for sex. At first, they may not do it for pleasure, but the habit may grow into a need. The active type

of homosexual tends to court any newcomer who catches his fancy, pursuing his object with the pertinacity of one who has literally nothing else to think about. If the newcomer does not yield by ingratiating tactics, he may take to threats.

Fishman quotes one instance when a prisoner had been forced into sodomy at the point of a knife. A young man molested by an old lag has unfortunately no redress. The young man dared not give away the offender for fear of reprisals, because the whole prison population bands together to make life hell for any inmate suspected of being a "stool pigeon." Fishman discusses in detail the various allegations by prisoners that they have been forced into sexual practices by warders, and he thinks it quite possible that some of their statements are true. He opines that it is likely some individuals may take on the job of prison guard, just as some become rubbers in Turkish baths for the opportunities of intimacies with men.

Sociologists have been struck by the way homosexuality becomes incorporated in prisons, in the inmates' culture, to the extent that different sexual roles, identified by slang labels, are allocated according to the prisoner's status in the inmate hierarchy. The inmates apply a number of labels to homosexual behaviour in prison depending upon the specific role assumed, the adeptness with which the assumed role is played, or the motivation for the behaviour. Broadly speaking, the inmates differentiate between penitentiary turnouts and actual homosexuals. The penitentiary turnout is the prisoner who resorts to homosexuality in prison because heterosexual relationships are not available, and in contrast the actual homosexual prefers homosexual relations in a free community.

The homosexual is labelled a sick person by the inmates because it is argued that the preference and selection of homosexual relations in a situation where choice is possible clearly constitute a true perversion. It is only within the high walls of a penitentiary where members of the opposite sex are unavailable that the values and norms regarding homosexual behaviour are redefined by the inmates and, with the limits imposed by this definition, accepted as a temporary substitute for heterosexual relations.

In a world without women, the tough, aggressive leaders of the criminal social system must preserve their image as supermen in order to maintain the respect of their underlings. This they do by



becoming what is known as wolves. These are predatory homosexuals who always take the active role or "husband's" role, subduing the weaker fellow prisoners by bribery, intimidation or by actual force. So long as they show no tenderness towards their sex objects, strictly using them as masturbatory machines rather than sexual partners, they risk no loss of face and their status as men and heterosexuals remains unchallenged in their own estimation as well as in that of their fellow prisoners. And very often, in pretence, the fantasies which accompany these activities remain essentially heterosexual.

Though wolves may treat their partners like slaves, they may also display fierce jealousies and possessiveness. The discovery of love letters or other forms of seduction of one already "married" may occasion serious fights. But even these events are based on the masculine "model" of a husband standing up for his rights.

The men who passively submit to pressure from the stronger and more experienced prisoners, and yield to the sexual requirements of the "wolves" thereby lose status and became type-cast as "Punks." The caste system in a prison can be very rigid. Once a man has been labelled a punk, he can hardly aspire to break into the higher ranks of "wolves" or "Jobbers." Lowest of all on the inmate social scale come the natural homosexuals of passive inclinations—the "Faggots," who proffer themselves spontaneously. They are looked down upon in the same way as women who are "too easy."

In the women's prisons, "femme" is the inmate who plays the female role in a homosexual relationship. Most women prefer to play this role because it gives them the opportunity to continue to play the feminine role in a meaningful way in prison. This "femme" continues to act out many of the functions assigned to the role of wife in civil society—cast in the context of the "marital" relationship.

The complementary role to the femme is the "Stud Broad"—also called "daddy"—who assumes the male role. The stud broad enjoys much prestige among the inmates for the reasons that the stud is said to provide the prison with the male image and also the role is considered to be a more difficult one for an inmate to assume and sustain over a period of time—because it is thought to be unnatural for a female to assume the guise of a male. Furthermore, the role is considered to be a difficult one to live up to, because studs not

only assume certain external symbols of sex differentiation, but in addition are expected to incorporate into role behaviour the many social expectations of the male role.

From the study of homosexual behaviour in female prisons by Ward and Kassenbaum it is clearly seen that homosexual relations are established voluntarily between the principals involved—no coercion is applied in obtaining a sexual partner. For the vast majority of the inmates, adjustment to the prison world is made by establishing a homosexual alliance with a compatible partner as a "marriage unit"—although it is difficult to draw any conclusions on the dynamics of mate selection, courtship and "marriage." However when a stud and femme have established a homosexual alliance, they are said to be "making it" or "tight," meaning they are recognized in the social sub-culture of the prison as constituting a legitimate married couple.

Cast in the context of a "marital" relationship, the homosexual dyad is viewed by the inmates as a meaningful personal and social relationship, though this mode of adjustment would be repugnant for most prisoners—with the exception of homosexuals who practise homosexuality in the free community. But the unique situation of the prison compels the inmates to redefine and attach new meaning to this behaviour within the prison structure. The most important goal in establishing a homosexual "marriage" alliance is to strive for what is referred to as a "sincere" relationship which is translated to mean a stable relationship and is based upon romantic love.

The "trick" is someone who allows herself to be exploited, rather than develop a relation that is sincere. And she permits exploitation in a variety of ways—economically and as a source of labour. Any individual who allows herself to be exploited in this manner is considered "weak" and "tricks" are regarded as "suckers" and "fools" because they may be kept dangling with promises. "Tricks" are held in low esteem by the inmates.

Then there are the inmates who utilize exploitative tactics. When an individual exploits each situation with a partner for its unique possibilities whether it be sexual gratification or material, the inmate is said to occupy a "chippie" role. The "chippie" establishes no single relationship and is said to be "making it" but not "in love" with any individual. In the inmates' eyes, the "chippie" is the prison prostitute. The inmate who terminates her affairs too

quickly—chippies from one bed to another—is held in contempt by the other inmates. And her promiscuous behaviour draws forth words of scorn from the inmates because the ideal cultural pattern in the prison is to establish a permanent relationship.

A clear distinction is made by the female inmates between homosexual activity that is considered to be promiscuous and that which is engaged in solely for sexual gratification. And the object of this relationship is to release sexual tension.

In male prisons, while the "punk" is the inmate who plays the submissive part in the homosexual relationship because he is coerced into doing so, in the female prison, on the other hand, the "punk" is the inmate so designated because she acts like a female, that is, takes on the coquettish mannerisms of a woman, when the expected behaviour is that of a male. Responsibility is placed upon the "punk" for being self-proclaimed studs without substance—unconvincing sexual deviate. The punk is, therefore, despised and ridiculed by the inmates for pretence and deceit.

The "turnabout" is the inmate who claims expertise at playing both male and female roles. She is the person who not only describes herself glowingly in terms of her versatility, that is "good either way" but stands ready to put her boasted skill to the test. Such self-asserted versatility, however, is viewed with amused contempt by the rest of the inmates, as they prefer a structured situation in the prison world, and a woman playing the male role one day and the female role the next, confuses the issue greatly. Therefore the turnabout is held in low esteem.

In response to the prison commitment, the social roles as distinguished and labelled by the female inmates constitute the basic structure of social relationships formed by the inmates.

A study of homosexual behaviour in male and female prisons made by Joan Henry in 1952 brought to light that women's prisons have an even greater incidence of homosexuality than men's. This would seem curious in view of the relative unobtrusiveness of lesbianism in the outside community. Various scholars who have studied the subject comment that some 80 to 90 per cent of the inmates of the various female prisons have a history of homosexuality.

Studies on qualitative differences between the homosexuality in male and female prisons brought to light some interesting features.

The differences in the behaviour pattern of the female and male inmates of the prisons reflect strongly the lesbian and male homosexuality in wider society. For instance, female inmates of prisons were much less aggressive in their sexual approaches, and courtship took the form of personal attentions, sympathy, flattery and gifts rather than intimidation or force. Those who maintained that they wanted to stay faithful to someone outside the prison were not molested. Deep attachments were formed, and were charged with romantic feelings, and passionate letters exchanged. Any action by the staff to separate the women might be followed by scenes of grief or attempted suicides. Brief mechanical contacts purely for the purpose of attaining orgasm, or manipulation of sex to gain goods or status were most untypical among the female prisoners.

While the deprivation of heterosexual intercourse was a prominent feature of the pains of imprisonment for men, this feature came low on the women's list of complaints. The women felt much more acutely the loss of affection and support they normally received from family and friends, and a yearning for something to fill this emotional vacuum appeared to supply the main driving force behind the conduct of those women who took to lesbianism.

Two fairly obvious factors that contribute to the prominence of homosexual behaviour in women's prisons are the feminine need for affection and support, which quite naturally leads to emotional and then sexual attachments, and whereas men take fairly readily to crime, and many male offenders are quite healthy characters from a psychological standpoint, women criminals, specially those who get themselves a prison sentence, are generally social misfits and unstable creatures.

A flare-up of homosexual behaviour during imprisonment is not peculiar to criminals. According to Gordon Westwood, who gives an account of his study of conditions in Japanese and German camps in his book *Society and the Homosexual* (Gollancz 1952), in these camps a minority of confirmed homosexuals would take the chance to run riot and provoke large numbers of "normals" to indulge with them. Most of the men, while professing hostility to all forms of homosexuality, had secret "affairs" of their own, most of which sooner or later became common knowledge owing to the lack of privacy. After an initial battle, the majority ultimately

succumbed to the temptation.

Westwood gives a few illustrative sexual histories of interned men. One of these, a young RAF officer, who was captured when he was 21, had no previous feelings of the sort he could remember. Men had often approached and made advances towards him, but he had always kept aloof. In the German prison camps, plenty of men, guards as well as prisoners, made advances. But he never gave way. However, he spent most of his time with a particular friend. One day he found himself admiring his friend's body. He felt very much ashamed and angry—but he could do nothing to banish the thought. And gradually he reached such a pitch that he could not bear his friend out of sight—and one day he let the friend kiss him. Westwood quotes him: 'It wasn't just a way of relieving ourselves as it seemed to be with most of the others. I can't really explain it. All I can say is that I have never seen a girl and a boy who love each other more than we do.'

What happened to this man on return to civilian life is interesting. Though he wanted a family and children, he went to live with his friend—because they could not bear to be separated.

Peter Wildeblood, Diplomatic Correspondent of *The Daily Mail*, who was sentenced to 18 months' imprisonment for homosexual offences in March 1954, writes in his book *Against the Law*: "The homosexuality in prison, however, appeared—both at Winchester and at Wormwood Scrubs, where I was sent later—to be almost exclusively of the emotional kind . . . what did happen—and I saw it happen again and again—was that two men became drawn together in a relationship so deep, happy and lasting that it can only be described as love."

Prison environments stimulate homosexual feelings and release homosexual behaviour even among many people who have never shown the slightest tendency of this kind before. The pains of imprisonment for the modern prisoner are seen more as attacks on the psychological level than in physical brutality, and life in prison is constricted and frustrating.

The disorientation resulting from the abrupt termination of the individual's freedom, the lack of opportunity for heterosexual relations, the impersonal discipline with no outlet for affection, the fracturing of every influence favourable to the cultivation of emotional reciprocity as a result of being cut off from family and

friends, the enforced idleness, the withholding of material goods, attacks on the self through the humiliating experiences incidental to a prison commitment, the lack of security and privacy, the loss of autonomy and responsibility to which life in a prison inevitably leads, all conspire to create sexual tension and to foster homosexual habits.

## Commercialized Homosexuality

Because of the social barriers to homosexual marriages and owing to something in the nature of their deviation which militates against lasting love affairs, many homosexuals appear drifting and unattached. Therefore they are often irretrievably promiscuous, and their inclination to seek an outlet with prostitutes is greater than that of heterosexual males.

Most heterosexual males are usually married, and hence have a less pressing need, as well as time and opportunity, to patronize female prostitutes. Nevertheless heterosexual men patronize female prostitutes more often than women employ gigolos. The same can be said to happen among homosexuals. The clients for commercial sex are more often males rather than lesbians.

The female prostitute usually banks on male clients among the minority of frustrated heterosexuals whose physical or temperamental disabilities interfere with success in marriage. However, the male prostitute might be said to find for his clientele a minority within a minority—though his potential clientele is extensive.

An interesting aspect of homosexuality is that the physical appearance of their partners counts more—particularly amongst men—and beyond a certain age a great many homosexuals find themselves much frustrated because they can no longer obtain desirable new partners by means of their own sexual attractiveness. Therefore there is a natural temptation to buy the favours of young men by presents, patronage or an actual fee.

Many furtive homosexuals, particularly those who, having got married or having accepted some sensitive public position dare not allow themselves to become entangled socially with a male lover, find that brief, impersonal encounters with prostitutes suit their convenience. Like some heterosexual men who are attracted to female prostitutes merely for the excitement and thrill, many

homosexuals find prostitutes particularly exciting because they derive an added thrill from the sordid atmosphere. Further excitement is added by the need to run the gauntlet of a watchful police.

According to Montgomery Hyde, who edited and wrote the foreword to *The Trials of Oscar Wilde*, the novelist was initiated into homosexual practices in 1886—the year following the passing of the English Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, which for the first time made “indecentcies among males” a crime in England. Hyde observes: “The legislation thus added the spice of danger to a conduct which had not hitherto been regarded as a crime in England.” And in the reminiscences of his homosexual conduct, *De Profundis*, which he wrote in jail, Oscar Wilde declares: “It was like feasting with panthers. The danger was half the excitement.”

In all metropolitan cities where clients with money are plentiful and personal habits are shielded from critical scrutiny by the anonymity of large, drifting populations, this trade flourishes. Police Officer Jersild of Denmark; who made a special study of male prostitution, has the opinion that the trade was particularly ripe in the countries of the Mediterranean coast. However, it would be absurd to draw the conclusion that these populations have more sexual deviants. It could also be that the situation reflects socio-economic factors, like unemployment, the effects of rapid urbanization and the wide economic gap between the rich and the poor.

In the poorer countries, particularly in the tourist towns, during the season numbers of unsettled youths seem to migrate, all coming from various parts of the country, and yet from nowhere, seeking to use prostitution as a means of support, while they may turn to other crimes than prostitution during the rest of the year.

According to police reports, over 25 per cent of the tourists visiting southern Portugal are homosexuals seeking adventures and prepared to pay. The situation is somewhat similar in southern Spain and southern Italy as well. In these countries, girls are closely guarded from any premarital sex experience and young men are obliged to turn to homo-erotic practices.

In Nigeria, the police hunted down some of the most well-known young homosexuals, shaved their heads, painted their scalps, and then paraded them in the market-place to arouse public scorn. But instead, their action resulted in arousing sympathy for the branded youths.

Jersild, in his research, found that young male prostitutes very often came from emotionally and socially impoverished family backgrounds. Many had police records, incidences of excessive drinking, educational backwardness, reform school committals, unemployment and work shyness—which are well-known breeding-grounds of delinquency in boys and immorality in girls.

Jersild found that most of the boys had been emotionally unsettled, badly behaved, or social misfits long before they took to professional prostitution. But some of them became more delinquent later, perhaps encouraged further in this direction by their experience of the easygoing nature with which money could be got by blackmailing and robbing their clients. About this Jersild remarks: "It is true that these boys are cruel, hard-boiled and arrogant, but it is also true—as we have seen—that they have become so as a result of gross abuse."

As it is mostly the unstable, demoralized, or anti-social type of boys who are most likely to take to prostitution, the chances of this activity leading to more serious crime is easy to understand. Homosexual men are often obliged to take prostitutes back to their homes, because alternative accommodation involves expenses and other dangers. In this way, they expose themselves to blackmail, or more often to assault and robbery. They may be further exposed to subsequent housebreaking either by the prostitute himself or by his criminal accomplices. In return, the prostitute youth gets a brief though unsettled taste of a way of life with a standard of living that would be quite unattainable to him by legitimate means.

Once a boy enters the field of prostitution, what gravitates him to the line of crime makes a very interesting sociological study. When a boy wants to give it up and rehabilitate himself into normal society, he finds he has put himself beyond the pale socially, and in his disappointment, it becomes tempting for him to lash out in retaliation. This he does by blackmailing his former clients for having seduced a minor. Therefore, while male soliciting and prostitution contravene the law of many countries, the police have good reason to be watchful of the male prostitution trade, in the expectation of criminal acts.

A male prostitute is different from a female prostitute in many significant respects. He is less likely to make an exclusive or full time occupation of prostitution, and he does not expect to persist

in it for many years. When not actually "engaged" in the game, he is quite likely to be working on a regular job. The job may be a normal desk job, or some criminal activity. Perhaps the reason may be that being a man, unless he limits his sexual activities to passive sodomy or fellatio, biologically it may be impossible for him to satisfy a series of clients in quick succession in the manner women do in a brothel. Besides, since many of them are also heterosexual, they are likely to be married and have families.

Unlike female prostitutes, men prostitutes are seldom recruited or organized by older pimps. But then, being men, they have less need for protection as they are unlikely to be bullied or harassed by their customers, and they prefer mostly to free-lance and go their own way.

Most men prostitutes are just amateurs, the sort of persons who have learned how to make a little money on the side every now and then—without any interruption to their otherwise ordinary working life. They are often seen in bars in and around the various cosmopolitan cities of the world, particularly near where members of the Services are stationed—as they learn early in life, from their more experienced mates, that a visit to the bars get them not only free drinks, liberal hospitality, but also a good fee at the end of the affair.

In a study of English boy prostitutes titled *Boy Prostitutes and their Fate*, Michael Craft, taking his samples from the boys under treatment in medico-penal institutions, pointed out the very uneven geographical distribution. In some towns where the local culture afforded no opportunity, the practice of prostitution had never caught on, except among youths in institutional confinement, whereas in other areas, epidemics of cinema masturbation seemed quite common.

A. J. Reiss in his study of the experiences and attitudes reported by boys at an American penal establishment, *The Social Integration of Queers and Peers*, found that the practice of taking payment from an adult homosexual in return for performing fellatio was fully accepted in the working-class delinquent culture. The boys knew all about the usual meeting places and fees before they would strike a deal with the prospective customer. A boy incurred no threat to his masculinity so long as the affair was brief and businesslike, and there was no question of any unusual sexual routine involved. If,

however, the client broke out of the accepted pattern and wanted other forms of sex or used any terms of endearment as if to a girl, or displayed any sign of familiarity outside the customary places of trade, the boys ganged together and thrashed him on the spot.

The boys had their own self-respect. Prostitution was a good and easy way of making some extra money, well accepted within their own sub-culture so long as their masculinity was not challenged. But a line was drawn where the relationship passed beyond a strict business deal into an emotional involvement.

In the USA, the specialist male brothelkeeper has a low status in the hierarchy of criminals—and he is seldom able to preserve his masculine image. Thus the sub-culture of the criminal classes favours homosexual prostitution only up to a certain point. Thereafter it acts as a limiting and circumscribing influence, dissuading the boy prostitute from a too intimate or too prolonged involvement with the world of homosexuals.

Jersild, in his sample of 300 male prostitutes, found that a third were under 18 years, and about four-fifths under 21, when they first began to take money for sexual activity. He believed that the percentage of real homosexuals and bisexuals among them was only 15 per cent. And the majority of them he found to be distinctly heterosexual in their natural preferences. He also found that the dangers to these 'youths' heterosexual adjustments did not appear very great. Only a negligible number established any permanent relationships with the homosexuals they encountered. Most of them drifted away from the homosexual society as they grew older.

In India, boy-brothels are very common in the bigger cities. The Bhindi Bazar and Foras Road areas of Bombay have entire rows of houses strictly catering to the needs of homosexual clients. Eight, nine and ten-year-old children play the role of whores in these brothels. The children offer their bodies, and do what the clients want them to do in every known perversion. Mostly it is old men who patronize young boys. Some children come to brothels through their parents. They are sold as sex slaves when their parents have too many children and cannot afford to support them. Others are the children of whores and trained by their mothers.

There are laws in India against this practice, but there are also ways of getting round them. One way of doing so is to have the children working in brothels as alleged entertainers. Most of these

boys are in fact good entertainers. Some of them dance marvellously, making gestures with their fingers, hands and necks as the musicians play their whining, lamenting, sad-happy music on their drums and strings. Some of the boys dress as small girls to induce an odder response, but others dress in the usual dhotis.

As with most research on criminological topics, studies of homosexual prostitution tend to be biased by the fact that samples known to police or medical men are not altogether typical. And besides, in some of these relationships it is difficult to draw a sharp distinction between friendly patronage and definite trade—specially when the junior partner is engaged otherwise in a daytime employment.

Almost all the scholars who have studied male prostitution, including Reiss, Craft, Doshay, Raven and Jersild, hold the view that the youthfulness of prostitutes, the comparative shortness of their careers and the fact that most of them retain a sexual preference for women in spite of their experiences with men tend to support the fact that the experience of seduction is not an important cause of homosexual fixation and erotic orientation.

## Homosexuality in Literature and Film

Homosexuality has been presented in literature more often than not in disguise—a code language or some other form of indirect representation.

Marcel Proust (1871-1922), one of the greatest of modern novelists, in *A La Recherche du Temps Perdu* (Remembrance of Things Past 1923-1927), depicts a homosexual love affair between Marcel and Albertine, rather than between Marcel and Albert. He describes, quite openly, the contemptible Baron de Charlus and, in a surprising revelation near the end, the manly aristocrat Robert de St Loup, as homosexuals.

Marcel Proust expresses his view of the homosexual in the society in which he lived in his persona, in the *Cities of the Plain* in 1932: "They are a race upon which a curse weighs and which must live amid falsehood and perjury, because it knows the world to regard punishable and scandalous, an as an inadmissible thing, its desire—which must deny its God . . ."

Andre Gide (1869-1951), Proust's contemporary, also wrote his best novels with characters disguised as heterosexuals, but in *Croydon* (1924), he made an open statement and justification of homosexuality. *Croydon* was basically a treatise on homosexual love.

Oscar Wilde (1854-1900) kept his homosexuality out of most of his writing—except in his little known work *Teleny*. But he confessed in court to "the love that dare not speak its name."

Homosexual works were rare in Medieval Europe—perhaps because men were inflicted for homosexual acts, not because of a scarcity of homosexual passion.

The tolerance of Greece and the Roman Empire towards homosexuality is well known. Greek literature abounds with homosexual love—of the kind of love that Zeus bore for Ganymede and Achilles for Patroclus. They could say, as David said to Jonathan, "thy love

to me was wonderful, passing the love of women" (II Samuel 1:26). Plato's *Symposium* (c. 384 B.C.) offers a variety of attractive justifications for homosexuality. The most celebrated of the *Symposium* is that of Aristophanes, who asserts that there were originally three sexes—men, women and men-women, whom the gods split into two and the halves go about seeking each other. Men seeking women, women seeking men, and men and men seeking each other.

Eastern literature does have a long tradition of homosexual love, though it offers nothing quite like the licentious homosexual freedom of Petronious Arbiter's *Satyricon* or Martial's acid gibes at homosexual life. *The Kama Sutra* (c. 400 A.D.), the sage Vatsyayana's love manual, includes instructions for the homosexual courtesan. The *Gulistan* of Sa'di (c. 1240 A.D.) contains songs of lament over the arrival of chin hair upon catamite's cheeks and also testifies to harsh social attitudes toward homosexual actions. In Chapter V, Story 20, when a man is caught in bed with a boy making love to him, he is sentenced to death.

*The One Thousand and One Nights* includes many homosexual tales. It includes the story of Kamar al-Zaman in which there are witty arguments against heterosexuality in the form of little couplets and quatrains.

In modern western literature, the artistic representation of the homosexual is dominated by Marcel Proust and Thomas Mann. Both writers see the homosexual as a tragic figure, and this view is amply illustrated in Mann's *Der Tod in Venedig* (Death in Venice, 1912). The story tells of a great but aging German writer who falls in love with a beautiful Polish boy vacationing, like himself, in Venice. On the day the boy leaves Venice, the writer dies.

The tremendous impact of this story lies in the brilliant, profound and disturbing theme. The disturbing aspect of the theme invokes shades of Socrates and Phaedrus and associates them with disease and dishonesty, the cosmetic beauty of Venice that hides a rotten and crumbling interior, unnatural practices, and death.

However, it is the male writers who have generally dominated this literature and filled the gaps in feminine descriptions of lesbianism. This has in a way led to a certain amount of distortions. One such example is D. H. Lawrence's *The Fox*. In this work he confidently assigns his philosophy of male and animal power to a lesbian relationship, so that we see a woman playing the male role in order

to assert her personality and her right to an independent life. But he does not allow her to be independent. When the fox appears—and later a man—she is caught. Her happiness too is swept away. All nature, even falling trees and errant poultry, conspire to drive her into submission to the male.

Open treatment of homosexuality has been avoided through most of the history of motion pictures before the '60s—with the exception of *Madchen in Uniform*. But there are many examples of disguised or sublimated homosexuality.

When women are at the receiving end of violence in bloodthirsty films, they are only the most dramatically effective victims and their mal-treatment almost always brings a sexual response from men. But when the violence is predominantly between man and man, as in Westerns, war films, and murder mysteries, the sexual component is less easily defined.

While there is nothing specially sexual in a gangster's mutilating another gangster or a policeman's shooting a suspect, no matter what specific sexual feelings the perpetrators may have at the time, there is something specifically homosexual, however, in the persecution of Billy Budd by the mate Claggart. This persecution, which ends in the death of both men, is in effect a courtship.

The humiliation and flagellation so common in films about sailing ships, mutinies at sea, Roman galleys, and the persecutions of drill sergeants, prison warders and shop foremen—subtly touch on the homosexual tendencies of the persons involved. With merely a slight push by the writer or the director, the sexual element dominates. *From Here to Eternity* is one such example.

One other interesting example is Charles Vidor's *Gilda* (1946). Though the film is associated in the popular mind with the upper reaches of ideal heterosexuality—being Rita Hayworth's most celebrated vehicle, yet the film is considered by some critics, mainly in Europe, to have a homosexual theme.

The '60s brought about a great change, when underground films began to achieve wide university and even commercial circulation. *The Fox*, *Staircase*, *The Killing of Sister George*, and *The Servant* appeared. Warhol's *Vinyl*, *Nude Restaurant* and *I a Man* tend more to lengthy discussion than to sexual activity, but their main theme is homosexuality.

*Luigi's Scornio Rising* employs rapid intercutting of shots of

sodomy and fellatio with long and heavily meaningful views of motor-cyclists lovingly pulling on their trousers and boots, heavy belts and black leather jackets.

Fellini's *Satyricon* (1970) presents male homosexual love in images of intense beauty. His Encolpius's pursuit of the beautiful boy Giton and the slow development of his rivalry with Ascyntos, a muscular rowdy, into a deeply felt masculine companionship, bring to the film a long-delayed flowering of homosexual erotica.

Among Hindi films, just two are worthy of mention in this line—*Dosti* and Raj Kapoor's *Sangam*.



## 11

## Venereal Diseases

Venereal diseases are propagated through sexual intercourse. And the disease can just as easily be transmitted from one person to another during homosexual as during heterosexual intercourse. The term venereal comes from the Latin *venereus*, "pertaining to Venus," the Goddess of Love. The two diseases that account for the vast majority of cases are gonorrhoea and syphilis. Specialists all over the world have expressed great concern about the phenomenal increase in the numbers of men appearing at V.D. clinics with syphilis, contracted through homosexuality, in recent years. About half the syphilitic infections are attributed to homosexual contacts.

Though ready cures for both these diseases are available in the form of penicillin and other antibiotics, incidence has been rising in recent years, particularly among people who are not willing to confide to their doctors the truth about their sexual habits. The incidence of anal sores can be fairly confidently attributed to homosexuality—whatever the patient's story.

Gonorrhoea is an infection caused by the bacterium 'Neisseria gonorrhoeae' and attacks the male urethra and a variety of mucous membrane tissues. This micro-organism does not survive without the living conditions provided by the human body and is transmitted through intercourse from the female vagina, or homosexually, from an infected rectum. There has never been a documented case of gonorrhoea contracted from a public toilet seat or from shaking hands with an infected individual.

In males, the primary symptom of gonorrhoea, known as the "clap" or "strain" in slang, is a purulent, yellowish pus discharge from the penis, causing a burning pain in passing urine. A sensation of itching is also felt within the urethra. It clears up very quickly with treatment. If left without treatment, it may persist in a chronic

involve the prostate gland, seminal vesicles, bladder, and kidneys and may lead to arthritis and other serious complications.

The passive homosexual with a gonococcal infection of the rectum may, in the beginning stages, have some slight anal soreness or discharge. But this can easily pass unnoticed. Sometimes this may also be attributed to the minor abrading often produced during the practice of sodomy. Therefore his first awareness of the disease may come from complaints by his sexual partners. The partners usually develop their symptoms a few days after contact.

Gonorrhoea in homosexuals is always propagated by anal intercourse. Promiscuous heterosexuals often use a condom during intercourse, and this usually helps to prevent infection. The use of germicidal ointment is not usually effective.

Syphilis is considered the most serious of the common venereal infections. It is generally believed that syphilis was brought to Europe by Columbus and his crew after their first voyage to the West Indies. Within a few years after Columbus's return in 1493 from his first voyage to the New World, epidemics of syphilis spread across Europe with devastating effects.

Syphilis is produced by a germ known as "spirochete," which is present in the blood, saliva, semen, vaginal secretions, or sores of an infected person. It was not till 1905 that the micro-organism that causes syphilis was identified. This infection can pass to another person only by direct contact, entering the body through one of the mucous linings like the mouth, anus, vagina or glans penis. However, the germs are never passed through ordinary skin, unless there is some cut or abrasion.

A variable incubation period of a week to three months passes before any symptoms are seen, and in its later stages syphilis can involve virtually any organ or tissue of the body, producing myriad symptoms similar to those of other diseases. This led the famous physician Sir William Osler to call it the "Great Irritator."

After the incubation period, a primary skin lesion at the site of contact develops into a hard, painless ulcer with raised edges, known as a chancre. In the heterosexual male, the primary chancre commonly appears somewhere on the penis, or the scrotum, or in the pubic area. It may also occasionally appear on the lips and sites where it cannot be overlooked. However, should it appear around or inside the anus, it may not be noticed or may be mistaken, even

by the doctor, for a haemorrhoid or fissure.

In the female the chancre usually appears on the external genitals but it may also appear in the vagina or on the cervix and thus escape detection. Sometimes it may appear on the mouth or elsewhere on the skin. Condoms do not necessarily provide protection against syphilis, as syphilitic infections in men may begin at other sites than the penis.

Left untreated, the chancre heals, leading to the illusion that the individual has recovered from whatever he thought he had. But after two or three months, the secondary stage of the illness begins. There is usually a generalized rash that appears over the trunk, the lymphatic glands swell, and there may be vague symptoms such as a headache, fever, indigestion, sore throat or muscle or joint pain and painless ulcers may develop in the mouth or around the anogenital area.

Most people do not associate these symptoms with the primary chancre, and during all this period of incubation and secondary phase, the patient is infectious. And a passive homosexual, whose sores are in a hidden place, may continue sex activity unaware—or unwilling to face the fact—that anything is the matter till it transpires that hundreds of men have acquired that illness from the same source.

If still untreated at the secondary stage, all symptoms disappear in a month or two, but the spirochetes remain alive in the blood stream, and they burrow into various tissues, particularly the blood vessels, the central nervous system—the brain and the spinal chord—and bones.

When untreated cases reach the final or tertiary stage of syphilis, it may play havoc with the circulatory and nervous systems and may result in heart failure, ruptured major blood vessels, loss of muscular control and sense of balance, blindness, deafness and severe mental disturbances. In the case of a female, syphilis may cause irretrievable damage to any baby she produces, as the infection can be transmitted to the foetus through the placenta. Ultimately the disease can be fatal.

Modern antibiotics, if taken conscientiously during the early stages, will successfully eradicate the disease in nearly all cases, but treatment with penicillin even at the late stages may be beneficial, depending upon the extent to which vital organs have already been

damaged.

Between homosexuals, syphilis is always transmitted through anal intercourse, although oral-genital contacts and even kissing may occasionally suffice. Hence it is advisable for promiscuous passive homosexuals to report for blood tests every four months as a precaution against concealed infection.

Lesbians, on account of the fact that mutual masturbation and embracing rarely transmit venereal infection, and because of their avoidance of promiscuity, rarely pass on venereal infection to each other. But then the really promiscuous lesbians, particularly those who are bisexual and have contact with both men and women, may very well do so.

## The Homosexual and the Community

Even today, people in India find it difficult to conceive of the very idea of homosexuality. Although homosexuality is the subject of a wide popular mythology, remarkably little is known about it in a scientific or factual way. Till recently, comment in serious studies of homosexuality has tended to be neglected, mostly to shield young people from too early awareness of what is considered the more unpleasant side of life.

Ideas are changing, and works on subjects which were hitherto taboo, such as marital adjustments and birth control, now circulate freely. However, strongly held opinions still abound and prudery and obscurantism linger—specially in relation to homosexuality. Serious medical and sociological investigations on this subject are scandalously few—considering the importance of the question in human terms—as many people dislike the revelations.

Among the general public in India, attitudes of ignorance still abound varying from an almost superstitious dread to abhorrence and contempt. This lack of knowledge does not mean, however, that homosexuality is in any sense a secret cult or a dark unmentionable sin, although when forced to accept its existence, society tends to be horrified and will turn on it with a savagery even greater than it accords to female prostitution.

A great deal is heard today in India as well as abroad about the need for the liberation of women and about women as an oppressed group. But very little is spoken or written about the homosexual group, which is also equally or more oppressed. And the lesbian—the female homosexual—is doubly oppressed being both a woman and a homosexual.

Books, novels and plays have appeared, a few in India, but many in the Western hemisphere giving lurid accounts of the "homosexual world" but it would be wrong to suppose that the

average sexual deviant feels himself or herself part of a secret brotherhood or enjoys the glamour and excitement of an unusual way of life. Most homosexuals, specially in India, live an isolated and unobtrusive life, scared to mingle with society at large, too obviously for fear of calling attention to themselves. Nevertheless, where possible, homosexuals, like other unpopular minorities, do tend to retreat into protective in-groups of their own—away from the unfriendliness of the large community.

They vary in character, like heterosexual groups, according to the locality of their upbringing, and depending on the social class and educational backgrounds, but all the same each one of the group feels a part of the minority, feared, disliked and persecuted by the majority, and this gives each one of them an extra dimension unknown to heterosexuals.

Most cosmopolitan Western cities contain a number of bars, bath houses, clubs, parks, beaches, streets and public toilets where homosexuals can make contacts and in some cases have sex. Even small towns in Europe and America have park areas and public toilets known to homosexuals as common meeting places. Here again, the female homosexual faces a disadvantage. There are very few meeting places in the case of women. Only very large cities like New York, London, Copenhagen or Hamburg have bars specially catering to lesbians. More often they will be a minority in male-oriented bars. Therefore, even more than men, female homosexuals are dependent upon the social networks of friends, parties, clubs and dances.

The need for somewhere to meet and establish contact with other lesbians was an important impetus in the formation of groups like America's Daughters of Bilitis, the Australian Lesbian Movement and Kenric in London. Contacts are also established through advertising in the personal columns of homosexual newspapers and magazines.

In India where such advertisements, bars, clubs or social groups are unheard of, homosexuals, men and women, join small cliques of friends of long standing who visit one another's homes, patronize the same cafes and restaurants and meet at one another's parties.

In ordinary company, many homosexuals who succeed in putting up a front of normality, feel themselves outsiders merely pretending to share the lives and interests of the majority. Among

their own kind, they can drop the mask; enclosed by their own tight little circle, insulated from the outside world they can be completely at ease, and they can enjoy the morale-boosting effect of being accepted for what they are.

Unlike some other minorities, those stigmatized by colour or caste, like the Negroes in the USA and the lower caste people in India, who cannot change their skin colour or caste to suit the occasion, homosexuals are able to drop their masks and mix together when they feel the need, whereas at other times, when at home in the family circle, or when dealing with colleagues at work they are able to function as part of the normal heterosexual world. In this respect, they may be said to resemble the "underworld" group of the criminal fraternity who know where to go to find accomplices, but otherwise keep out of sight. The majority of homosexuals, from both necessity and preference, try to conceal their condition from employers and colleagues, and keep their private lives as detached as possible. They usually avoid making sexual contacts with persons they meet at work.

While methods of entry into camaraderie may differ from one country to another, varying according to the social structure of each country, establishing actual sexual contacts almost follow the same pattern everywhere—visiting the right place in the right clothes and knowing the right conversational gambits.

In London, sexual contacts may be established in elegant West End clubs, or in public bars, and in India it is not unlikely that such contacts are established in temples, in cafes or parks, but in all cases men and women on the look out for others of similar inclination have to be circumspect in their approach. In the initial stage of acquaintance, they throw out little hints or phrases with double meanings, which might escape the attention of the unsuspecting. But if these are taken up or reciprocated, then gradually broader and broader hints get passed back and forth—till open declarations of sexual preferences are exchanged.

Unlike some other minorities, for example "untouchables" or Negroes, the social stigma of homosexuality is not shared by the rest of the family members of the individual. Unlike a physical defect, there remains always the suspicion in the mind of the individual that he or she could rid himself or herself of it if so wanted. Most homosexuals feel caught in an insoluble predicament. If they

disclose their homosexuality to their parents, they will risk anger and pain, and yet if they hide it, they must drift apart, avoiding any contact that might uncover their essential selves.

Most books and papers about homosexuality barely touch this problem, which tends to consider the family only as part of the etiology of homosexuality, and not as part of an environment in which even the most self-accepting homosexual lives. This is a clear example of how social attitudes themselves create the homosexual problem—for part of that problem is this very estrangement from the family. And it is here that the double life the homosexual is forced to lead ceases to be a game and becomes instead a hard and painful reality.

Thus the homosexual continually seeks to arrive at a compromising life-style in the interaction between his or her sexual and emotional needs, the stigma with which these are branded by society and the closed homosexual world through which one can meet others with similar needs. While within this world, a homosexual can feel identified and accepted, yet the internal knowledge of outside is always there, and this can produce both heightened sensitivity and considerable neurosis.

A fine exploration of the homosexual sensibility, the bitterness, irony and the amusement of the homosexual who moves continually between a homosexual world and the outside is perfectly caught in Christopher Isherwood's novel *A Single Man*. While many other books trying to explore the homosexual sensibility, such as *The Boys in the Band*, *Giovanni's Room* or *The City and the Pillars* verge on melodrama, Christopher Isherwood's understatement is a valuable relief. Isherwood describes in *A Single Man* one day in the life of a lonely, middle-aged writer George—and one may draw the conclusion that it is Isherwood himself—living out his life on the Southern California coast, alone after the death of his lover. Giving a lecture at the local college, George says, "A minority has its own kind of aggression. It absolutely dares the majority to attack it. It hates the majority—not without a cause. . . ." There is bitterness in the book. There is self-parody. "Why," laments George, "can't these modern writers stick to the old simple, wholesome themes—such as, for example, boys?"

In general, it can be boldly stated that the homosexual sensibility is greatly a product of social pressures and oppression, caused by

the sheer weariness of continually bearing a stigma.

It is not surprising that many of the deviants' own attitudes harden and they begin to reject the values of the society they perceive as oppressive—feeling themselves constantly under attack. One can observe in individual cases how some homosexuals who feel themselves continually spurned, finally contract out of the whole business of trying to keep up with normal society and develop manners and morals of outlandish homosexual groups, and a contempt for the dull, conventional outlook of the “normal” world. This no doubt is the result of the vicious circle of the rejection and counter-rejection phenomenon that is caused by oppressive society.

The female homosexual, who is doubly oppressed, suffers greater conflicts because of her dependent role in society, since men see women as erotic objects, as beings who are socially, physically and sexually inferior to themselves, and as a result the governing attitude to lesbianism in a male-dominated society is one of loathsomeness and contempt, if not direct condemnation.

While male homosexuality has evoked savage condemnation by society, lesbianism has evaded the restrictions of civil law and the reasons for this are indicative of society's general view of the deviation. Homosexuality was made a crime in Britain in 1885 when Henry Labouchere, the Liberal-Radical M.P., and Editor of the popular magazine *Truth*, managed to insert a new clause into the Criminal Law Amendment Bill making “indecentities” between adult males in private an offence punishable with imprisonment. However, female practices were excluded. The story goes that this was because Queen Victoria did not believe, or quite understand, how women could commit homosexual acts. Rather than explain to her, the men who formulated the Bill considered it best to exclude females from it.

In 1920, there was an attempt to make lesbianism a criminal offence, when the House of Lords debated a Sexual Offences Bill that eventually became the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1922. This move failed completely, and female homosexuals have always been free of legal restriction in the UK and in other countries as well. It was during this period that the subject of lesbianism was given its first major public airing in the UK and from this a measure of the prevailing attitudes can be assessed.

Earlier, during the Oscar Wilde scandal, it was the male homosexual who had been pilloried and now it was the turn of the women. Previous references to lesbianism in the 17th and 18th centuries had been scanty and always accompanied by a sort of scandalized giggle. But when the English novelist, Radclyffe Hall, published her sad, romantic novel *The Well of Loneliness*, in 1928, James Douglas of *The Sunday Express* launched a virulent attack on the book and members of the public expressed outraged horror and shock. James Douglas wrote: “I would rather give a healthy boy or a healthy girl a phial of prussic acid than this novel. Poison kills the body, but moral poison kills the soul.”

On a request from the Home Secretary, the publishers Jonathan Cape, had to withdraw it from circulation, and a few months later, the book was prosecuted and the Bow Street Magistrate, Sir Charles Biron, declared that the book was an offence against public decency, and ordered the destruction of all copies. What seems to have troubled the journalists, the prosecution and the Magistrate was that they were being asked to take lesbianism seriously. The novel merely presented a case—it neither condemned nor ridiculed the problem.

For society to condemn a particular “deviation,” it must first acknowledge and seriously consider its existence, and by refusing to do so it runs away from its responsibility, finds an excuse for ignoring the problem, or tries to trivialize it through mockery. Though today members of Western society regard themselves as more enlightened, and, therefore more sympathetic, ignorance of lesbianism and its nature still remains. As late as 1962, the well-respected British journal, *Twentieth Century*, published an article about lesbianism. The text was not only under-researched but faintly unpleasant in tone, although the author was, clearly trying to express understanding and sympathy.

A female homosexual, unfortunately, possesses the image of a tough, masculine woman dressed like a man and probably “doggy” or “horsey,” and it is beyond the imagination of an average person that a charming, pretty young woman with typically feminine mannerisms could possibly be a female homosexual. Yet there is another aspect of social experience that seems to be in direct conflict with the reaction of disbelief and horror with which female homosexuality is faced—this is the acceptance of, and in some cases the actual

need to see, two naked women arousing each other sexually.

On a higher level, this is reflected in painting and sculpture produced by artists through the centuries, for instance, in the tradition of bathing pictures and such paintings as Courbet's 'Sleepers', in which two beautiful women are shown completely naked, sleeping together. Hindu temple sculptures show female figures engaging in cunnilingus and other forms of erotic poses. This very theme again finds a perverse reflection on a much lower level in sex-exploitation movies in which a lesbian scene is virtually mandatory. And even straightforward, commercial movies are including such references nowadays—in these sexually more explicit and self-conscious times.

Hard-core pornography, books, films and photographs always have a high lesbian content and studies of group sex reveal the commonplace acceptance of situations in which men watch the sexual pairing of women.

It seems rather ironical, but physical contact between females is tolerated on the artistic or erotic level, whereas authentic lesbianism is despised. One can only draw the conclusion that the impulse behind this attitude derives from the way in which some men regard women—strictly as erotic objects. There are men who are sexually aroused by the sight of two women making love, because they are women and doubly so because there are two of them, and they project themselves into the situation and fantasize twice the fun! Similar episodes concerning male homosexuality are totally unknown in these contexts.

Since men see women strictly as erotic objects, as beings who are socially, physically and sexually inferior to themselves, the governing attitude to lesbianism in a male-dominated society is essentially that lesbianism is harmless, because it does not threaten the superior masculine position, and also there is always the assumption that a real man could change a lesbian.

However, since the publication of the Kinsey report on *Sexual Behaviour in the Human Female* in 1953, scientists and sociologists have attempted to make assessments of the incidence of sexual deviation in women, and it is only since then that the subject of female homosexuality has been taken up quite seriously. Statistically speaking, homosexual relationships between women are less common than those between men, but on the other hand, lesbianism

has always attracted less attention than male homosexuality. For example, soliciting among women, or cases of seduction of minors or children are almost unknown, since the adult lesbian is very rarely interested in seducing children.

Contrary to the general belief, Havelock Ellis and Kraft Ebing, foremost of the modern sexologists, believed that homosexuality was evenly distributed between the sexes, and a thorough research on the subject indicates that they were right. In 1966, Bryan Magee published a book in Great Britain, *One in Twenty*, based on his study of homosexuality. He states that it is now virtually certain that something like one person in 20, regardless of sex, is a practising homosexual. Therefore, it would be only logical to suppose that there are as many exclusively female homosexuals as there are males. Then there is also the possibility of the existence of a rather larger sub-group of females who are drawn into emotional and physical relationships at certain times—like when the individual is plunged into a single sex community, specially in prison where the individual is deprived not merely of heterosexual contact, but of the general warmth and affection of the outside world.

Paul H. Gebhard, the American social psychologist, reports in his book *Female Sexuality*, published in 1970, his observations of a girl who had been exclusively heterosexual but who enjoyed a considerable amount of homosexual experience in prison. Later, after release from prison, she returned to her earlier heterosexual preferences.

Evidence of lesbian relationships between prostitutes, concubines, and among unhappily married women are ample, and well recorded by psychiatrists and social commentators, but as yet no one seems to have attempted to assess the actual quality of these relationships. However, it is generally suggested that they represent a retreat to gentleness and tender affection after the gross and crude attentions of men, but here again it may be a peculiarly male view with its inference that a good and gentle man would bring about a cure.

Some sociologists hold the opinion that lesbians are found more frequently in some occupations than in others, for instance, the arts, positions in girls' schools and women's institutions, and as guards in women's prisons. But that is as much a generalization as the assumption that most male homosexuals are dress designers and actors, which has been proved untrue.

The Minorities Research Group, a society of lesbians founded in the UK, conducted a survey in 1963, which indicates that their members represented a very wide range of occupations from secretaries to students. This leaves no room for doubt that lesbians are found in every occupation.

Serious acceptance of society still remains a problem for the homosexual woman. Despite her comparative legal and social freedom, the lesbian is only beginning to make her existence known as a significant factor in the general social structure, whereas the male homosexual has never had to convince society that he exists. He has to fight only for acceptance and tolerance.

Lesbian is still a dirty, undermining word. Men who may resent or be frightened by any sign that women can be independent of them, use this word to describe a self-supporting, militant woman. There is also a general mistaken assumption that the articulate and increasingly incisive voice of the Women's Liberation movement is lesbian in tone. The charge of lesbianism, directed at militant and independent women, is nothing new. In fact George Dangerfield in his very popular book *The Strange Death of Liberal England*, published in 1936, made the sweeping remark suggesting an outbreak of lesbianism among the suffragettes in 1912. However, this charge was later explored and dismissed by Constance Rover in her book, *Love, Morals and Feminists*, a fascinating study published in Great Britain in 1970.

It is significant that whereas few people would regard an all-male gathering as having a homosexual content, such a feeling does apparently arise when women join together, particularly in an aggressive way. It is quite likely that lesbians may well attach themselves to the Women's Liberation movement, but only because their problems are so often the problems of women in society rather than those of homosexuals in society. The demands for equal pay, an end to discrimination in housing, and equality regarding taxation and pensions are common to all women in society and have a social rather than sexual basis. Every woman who lends her voice to this movement, irrespective of her sexual preferences, desires a release from male chauvinism.

It is almost meaningless to equate the problems of the lesbian with those of the male homosexual, whose fight for acceptance is easier since the social terms of reference in which he requires

equality is established, society all over the world having a male-dominated structure. While the lesbian must fight for acceptance of a deviation from the alleged norm, simultaneously she must also fight male domination. In a country like India, acceptance of lesbianism is far-fetched, as the time seems far away when women can acquire a position in society equal to men.

The most popular notion in India of what homosexuals are, is generally that they are a sexual minority who are strange, sick, odd, queers, unlike the great, wholesome majority of the "normal" folk. A homosexual is always aware that the majority of people react in a hostile fashion, as well as homosexual men and women who identify with them, or feel that they should do so. This leads to such people developing fundamentally warped personalities owing to the strain of adopting either a hypocritical heterosexual life-style, or an exaggeratedly homosexual one—neither of which expresses their true feelings.

It is not surprising that a society which remains basically anti-sexual and repressive and in which many people still believe that any sexual relationship outside marriage is wrong and even that sex itself is "dirty," should look down upon homosexual behaviour as shocking and unacceptable. To the average person in India, homosexuality is "unnatural," a willful vice and perversion.

It is of course impossible for the homosexual in India to state his or her case while the activity itself is criminal, and the individual himself or herself is regarded as a freak. Public bias is based on a lack of knowledge, and an unwillingness on the part of society to tolerate anything that does not conform to its family-based, heterosexual structure—and this attitude is fostered by a culture that has unhealthy, exaggerated feelings of shame and guilt over all forms of sexual expression, whether so-called normal or abnormal.

One myth that needs dispelling is the popular notion that all adult homosexuals seduce young boys or even children. On the contrary, ordinary homosexuals do not share, do not approve of and fear to be associated with "paedophiles," the technical name for child molesters.

Paedophiles may not always be homosexuals, even though criminal statistics show that assailants are almost always males making sexual approaches to immature, pre-pubertal children of

either sex. While this represents a perversion, as it is the acting out of an impulse that few people admit to sharing, it can properly be classed as a double perversion if the assailant chooses a child of his own sex. It may seem somewhat hypocritical to condemn homosexuals as doubly perverse when they show an interest in youth, when for older heterosexuals to yield to their impulses with adolescents many years younger than themselves is rarely called a perversion. But in the case of homosexuals, indulgence is thought of as particularly immoral, on the ground that seduction might affect a young person's sexual orientation.

Gordon Westwood in his book *A Minority* records that in his survey of a sample of male homosexual volunteers, he came across only three paedophiles out of a total of 127 men interviewed. All three were stated to have been exclusively or predominantly attracted by young boys. Westwood cites that one of them remarked he understood how homosexuals generally despised men who went with young boys, but he felt just the same disgust for the men who went with other men and the thought of an act of buggery appalled him. The other two men in Westwood's sample admitted to isolated incidents with boys under thirteen. However, they also admitted their preference for adult partners. A further seven per cent of the males Westwood interviewed confessed to occasional experiences with adolescents of 14 or 15—but expressed a sense of shame about it.

In a massive study conducted by the Institute of Sex Research at Indiana University, based on thousands of convicted sex offenders, it was found that only nine per cent of men convicted of homosexual offences with adults had ever had contact with children. And only one per cent admitted to a preference for children.

It seems beyond dispute that the public image of a typical homosexual as a child molester and a youth seducer does not have any basis. A significant minority of male homosexuals share with heterosexuals a predilection for adolescents who have only recently reached puberty. Some homosexuals may indulge in these desires frequently and shamelessly, while others may do so only occasionally and perhaps with severe guilt feelings. Nevertheless, men strongly attracted to pre-pubertal children—the real paedophiles—are much less common and they seem to run very much to type and to differ considerably in background and personality from ordinary

heterosexuals or homosexuals.

Homosexuals can be found in every walk of life, in every country in the world. They are to be found among school teachers, surgeons, students, university professors, gas-station attendants, government officials, telephoae operators, blue-collar workers, chefs, waiters, physical education teachers, doctors, lawyers, writers, actors, artists, hair-dressers, construction workers and in almost every vocation in life. They are numerous and they have one thing in common: they are all homosexuals.

Heterosexual society dictates to the world how people should live and what they should do. Heterosexual society is based mostly on authoritarianism. The authoritarians are judges, priests and professors and their weapons of control are guilt, justice, punishment, and fear.

In the society in which we live, fundamentally the definition of acceptable sexuality flows from the need to reinforce the nuclear family, the institution which acts as the major vehicle for the reproduction of the individuals who form class society as a whole, and any other form of sexuality is despised and attacked. And the "acceptable" sexuality rigidly relegates women to passive, secondary roles, and men to the playing of active aggressive roles which is considered the epitome of masculinity. The rise of women's liberation struggles in the past few years is the expression of revolt against confining, dehumanizing, sexual-social relations.

Homosexual relationships break out of the norms prescribed by the needs of the monogamous nuclear family and holds the threat of undermining the ideological foundation of the family. Homosexual relations generally occur outside of legal, reproductive, and economic definitions and thus violate the basic assumptions of the bourgeois notions of the family and marriage. Male chauvinism, the ideological mainstay of social sexuality, is confronted directly by homosexuality precisely because sexual roles are demonstrated to be learned, and are indeed imposed upon us by society. The fierce resistance to homosexuality exhibited by the institutions of society is a direct response to the threat the social order feels from sexual behaviour outside the prescribed boundaries of "normal sexuality."

Left to themselves, many homosexuals have proved to be useful citizens and have made great contributions in the intellectual, artistic and cultural fields. Some of the greatest, painters, sculptors, writers,



poets, artists and musicians of the world are homosexuals. Oscar Wilde, himself a homosexual, in his essay, *The Portrait of Mr W.H.*, expresses the view that homosexual attachments are widespread among artists. Even more, as he claimed in the course of his cross-examination during trial, "It is an incident common in any artist's life."

Havelock Ellis in *Studies in the Psychology of Sex* has this to say:

There cannot be the slightest doubt that intellectual and artistic abilities of the highest order have frequently been associated with congenitally inverted temperaments . . . The fact that homosexuality is specially common among men of exceptional talent was long since noted by Dante. It has been noted since and remains a remarkable fact. . . Artistic aptitude and a love of music are found among a large proportion of educated inverts, in my experience as much as 68 per cent.

Krestschmer in *The Psychology of Men of Genius* states that one of the various qualities among exceptionally talented men he noted was sexual inversion. He says: "There is unmistakably, in the case of gifted persons, a peculiar, positive and valuable drive emanating from the sphere of these abnormal (homosexual) instinctive impulses." The one-time war correspondent Max Levner writes in *The New York Post* of 20 July 1950: "The fact is that homosexuals were a good distance ahead of the armed forces in education, and rating and intelligence."

Sir Winston Churchill was said to be a homosexual as a young man. He fought a libel action to prove that he wasn't, but the results were inconclusive. Charles Laughton, one of the top names in Hollywood, it was found after his death, was a homosexual. Elsa Lanchester, also a prominent film personality of Hollywood, declared it in public when she commissioned Charles Higham to write the biography of the actor.

## 13

### Gay Lib

Homosexuals have been oppressed in all societies. They have been considered the negation of heterosexuality and of the nuclear family structure, and as such they have been driven from their jobs, families, education, and sometimes from life itself. The worst thing about being a homosexual is experiencing the anti-homosexuality of society. And to survive in this hostile environment, most homosexuals hide their sexuality. The result is the fear associated with the possible discovery, and shame and guilt.

In Western countries, provision for certain moral standards already force gay doctors and gay lawyers to hide their homosexuality. Attorneys who handle the defence of homosexuals and homophile groups find it necessary to reiterate constantly that they are not themselves homosexual.

In jails, homosexual oppression is even greater—contrary to the general linking up of the word "homosexual" and the word "jail" and conjuring images of sex perverts attacking normal men. Like most oppressed people who are carted off by the police to the nation's prisons, these homosexual men become victims of a vicious system—to the extent that there are violent acts in jail because of the exclusively aggressive behaviour of heterosexual men. Heterosexual male prisoners see the homosexual men as female sex objects and very often subject them to rape, sexual assault and brutality.

The Roman Catholic Church has always been a deadly enemy of the homosexual throughout history. Even today, Church dogma strikes fear in the heart, mind and body of many who fall under its influence. Protestant and Jewish dogma is no less destructive.

The anti-homosexuality statutes in America are full of such phrases as "unnatural intercourse," "unnatural crimes" and "infamous crimes against Nature." The concept that all homosexual acts are "unnatural" is a part of the prevailing myth system or

ideology of society. And most people would probably agree, at least publicly, that homosexuality is "unnatural." Yet the findings of all relevant and intellectually respectable social research support the conclusion that homosexual acts represent natural, completely human forms of behaviour.

Lesbians are the ultimate insult to the sexist male and the world he has built around his weaknesses. Why? Because they ignore him. Heterosexual women are still caught up in reacting to him. The woman is trained to repress what the man is trained to express. He believes in male supremacy and heterosexual chauvinism. But the lesbians ignore him. Because they ignore him, because they are the ultimate insult, they pay and pay very heavily. They are fired from jobs, expelled from schools, banished from their homes and even beaten. And lesbians who hide and escape open hostility suffer equal oppression through psychic damage caused by their fear and guilt. Lesbianism is the one issue that deals with women responding positively to other women as total human beings worthy of total commitment. It is one area where no male can tread.

The violation of gay people in the past forced them into individual solutions: criminality, madness, mysticism, abstract creativity, suicide, and the conformity of the closet life-style.

The individual, who finds his way of life in conflict with the culture he lives in, may respond in various ways. Many an individual may attempt to deny his own nature and to adopt the prevailing behaviour patterns even if they are alien to him. But then there are individuals who tend to examine the existing culture critically, to understand its defects and to struggle to change that society.

On a June evening in 1969, the police began what was called a routine raid on the Stone Wall Inn in Christopher Street of Greenwich Village, the most popular gay men's bar in New York. But the raid did not go off as planned. The gays fought back. The Gay Liberation Movement was born.

Gay Liberation was formed by a group of persons who were angry to the point of explosion at the prevailing oppression of homosexuals. And their aims are to bring about a fundamental change in the structure and material base of society. Gay Liberation on the surface is a struggle by homosexuals for dignity and respect—a struggle for civil rights. They want to come out in the open and end their hiding. They want to end such terms applied to them as

"faggots," "dyke" and "queer," to hold down jobs without having to play straight, and to change and abolish those laws which restrict or denigrate them.

But the movement for a new definition of sexuality does not and cannot end there. The definition of sexism, as developed by Women's Liberation and Gay Liberation presupposes a struggle against the main perpetrators of sexism—heterosexual men—and against the manifestations of sexism as they appear in all people.

The revolutionary goals of Gay Liberation are a struggle against sexism and the chauvinistic practices that go with it and the termination of the system of male supremacy. At the Revolutionary People's Constitutional Convention meeting in Philadelphia, the Male Homosexual Workshop put it this way: "Sexism is a belief or practice that the sex or sexual orientation of human beings gives to some the right to certain privileges, powers, or roles, while denying to others their full potential. Within the context of our society, sexism is primarily manifested through male supremacy and heterosexual chauvinism."

The bid of homosexuals for acceptance as normal human beings encounters at the outset not only the problem of divergence from the accepted norm of sexual expression but the entire thorny issue of sex mores. The militant homosexuals' slogan, "Gay is good" proceeds from a basic affirmation that sexual love is good and its expression need not be limited to heterosexual relationships in order to partake of positive values.

A homosexual individual dismissed from the army on discovery of his sex orientation wrote the following bit of graffiti published recently in a Chicago newsletter: "The Government gave me a medal for killing many men, and a dishonourable discharge for loving one." There is a need to call into question a value system which makes possible a situation such as this.

Homosexuals, like other oppressed minorities in pre-liberation consciousness, long accepted sub-human status as deserved. They dutifully imitated heterosexuals—their relationships crippled by that and by the projected self-contempt of the oppressed—and accepted heterosexual values, which have created the infamous homosexual misery and self-hate. They lived in feelings of isolation and loneliness, fear and mistrust of others and a need for their love.

Today conditions are changing and the isolation is breaking

down. Gay Lib is also seeking solutions through directing their anti-social energies against systems of caste and class other than those of gender. People are beginning to realize that the end of classes and castes and even the survival of human life depend on the total destruction of the caste system which has made women objects of heterosexual men and made gay people outcasts of society.

Gay Liberation has covered a wide terrain—geographically and intellectually. They have recognized their oppression, and in different ways are dealing with it. They are also confronting male chauvinism towards women and one another and racism. They are coping with gender identities and gender chauvinism. Through revolution they hope to create conditions leading to the destruction of the gender caste system and thereby to the Gay Liberation of all people. They hope that it will be a total change which will reach to the roots of the present social order and destroy all of its aspects that restrain freedom.

The following is an excerpt from a working paper prepared by the Chicago Gay Liberation for the Revolutionary People's Constitutional Convention, plenary session, held in Philadelphia in September 1970.

#### *Grievances Common to All Homosexuals*

##### *(i) Employment and Other Economic Factors*

*(a) Hiring.* In addition to the particular discrimination against black, female and poor homosexuals, we are at a disadvantage because of discriminatory hiring practices—unless, of course, we “pass.” There is a tracking system which determines the positions open to homosexuals where we are able to work in the company of other homosexuals. We often take these jobs even though we may not like them and the pay may be low, just so we won't have to worry about being found out.

Our women may become physical education teachers and nurses; our men may become beauticians or ribbon clerks for those reasons. There is nothing wrong with those jobs, but the choice should be based on interest and ability. There are no ‘gay jobs’; there are no ‘women's jobs’. For known homosexuals, there is no employment at all except in a few fields, e.g. theatre, music, etc., which require special talents.

#### *Gay Lib*

*(b) Firing.* Since firing of known homosexuals is notorious, most of us hold jobs which would be closed to us if we didn't “pass.” We do so at a tremendous and cruel personal cost, for we must hide what, in our hearts, we know to be important and beautiful—our sexuality. Forced to wear a heterosexual mask, we are brain-washed (without even knowing it) into believing that our sex is shameful and unnatural—this belief is usually expressed as a tendency toward compulsive promiscuity, sexual objectification of each other, and loneliness.

*(c) Income.* The jobs into which we are tracked are often low-paying and certainly alienating. And the higher federal income taxation of “single” people—that is, those whose relationships are not recognized as legal—discriminates against them economically.

##### *(ii) Political*

*(a) Electoral politics.* As homosexuals we have no representation in the government, and never have had. Third World and female homosexuals are especially unrepresented, but even the white male as a homosexual has no voice. Presently there are politicians in New York and California who are trying to attract the “gay vote.” But they are not homosexual and cannot represent our needs and interests. Furthermore, their political parties are corrupted by racism, sexism (male chauvinism) and anti-homosexual prejudice and are tied economically to those who are responsible, ultimately, for our continued oppression.

How can these politicians be on our side, in practice? We have never had an admitted homosexual in public office, and our heterosexual “representatives” have never done anything for us although we have worked in their campaigns and given them our votes. But even if we could find spokesmen and women, they would be ineffective as part of a social system that is based on oppression, anyway.

*(b) The “movement.”* As we in Gay Liberation look around us to find out who are our friends and potential allies, we see that the Black Panther Party, personified by its Supreme Commander Huey P. Newton, is the first national organization to give us such warm, public support, as well as official recognition. For years, many of us have worked in radical organizations always hiding our identities, always working in the struggles of others. Some so-called “Marxist” organizations do not allow homosexual

membership. This has been very oppressive to us and has kept many of us, who were potential radicals, from radicalization. These groups and individuals treat us as badly as their supposed enemy, the "ruling class" that they are always talking about. In abusing homosexuals they show they cannot tell the difference between their friends and their enemies and are probably unable to make principled political alliances. Failing to recognize our grievances as legitimate, these "revolutionaries" and "radicals" are not only inhuman but also counter-revolutionary. We will no longer work within such groups.

(iii) *Special Institutions*

(a) *The law and the state.* Our most immediate oppressors are the pigs. We are beaten, entrapped, enticed, raided, taunted, arrested and jailed. In jail we are jeered at, gang-raped, beaten and killed, with full encouragement and participation by the pigs. Every homosexual lives in fear of the pigs, except that we are beginning to fight back! The reasons are not that the pigs are just prejudiced (which they are) or that they "over-react", but that they are given silent approval by the power structure for their violence against us. Since our lives are defined as illegal, immoral, and unnatural, there is no reason why the pigs shouldn't harass us—and they are never punished for it.

The law is against us, but changing laws makes no difference. That must be crystal clear; any homosexual from Chicago, where homosexuality is legal, will tell you that changing the law makes no difference. The pigs must be fought but we must see beyond them to ultimate sources of power—an elite of super-rich, white males who control production and therefore the prevailing ideology. Their representatives may try to tempt us with reforms, "progress," divide us by class and skin privileges, buy us off with a piece of the pie or male supremacy because we have just begun to join the revolutionary and progressive people. But common sense tells us that as long as the power rests in the hands of a few and not with the people—both straight and gay—that power can be used to oppress homosexuals.

(b) *Housing—the homosexual ghetto.* Homosexuals are frequently denied housing, much more so if they are also female or black. We avoid the anti-homosexual discrimination by "passing." But life for homosexuals is so psychologically oppressive in a

heterosexual neighbourhood that we tend to live in homosexual neighbourhoods which take on ghetto-like characteristics. These conditions should not be confused with the oppression in the black, brown and poor white ghettos, but there are some similarities. No sooner is it established that a neighbourhood is Gay than rents and real estate prices rise. Those that exploit us as consumers know that we will pay through the nose, even when we aren't well off, for the psychological comfort of living among "our own kind."

Most of us probably live outside of these communities, but ghetto institutions are still part of our lives. We neither control nor own the institutions which we use. These bars, shops, movie-houses, etc., are owned by businessmen who serve their own interests or the Mafia's but do not serve us at all. The prices are notoriously high, and the practices are often racist, sexist and anti-working class. This materially oppresses female, black and poor homosexuals and also reinforces the false consciousness (racism, sexism, class-chauvinism) which divides us as a group and, in the end, oppresses us all.

(c) *Education.* We have no stake in education which is racist, male-chauvinist, anti-working class and anti-homosexual. The schools are not people's schools and therefore do not serve the people. They certainly do not serve us as homosexuals, but teach ideology that is destructive to us and helps to keep us social outcasts. What child would have disdain for homosexuals? They have to be taught that. There are no positive educational programmes on homosexuality which would alleviate anti-homosexual prejudice and our own self-hate, which comes when we discover what we are. The subject is avoided in schools, and is usually assumed to be taboo and dirty by the students. It is wrong to mislead the people this way and perpetuate attitudes which harm us.

The only models for love and sexuality according to our "educators" are heterosexual ones in the context of state-sanctioned monogamous white relationships which oppress women. Homosexual authors are usually ignored, especially if they write about their homosexuality, like James Baldwin. Others, like Walt Whitman or Gertrude Stein, are taught but never as homosexual writers. Like blacks and women, we are taught, by omission, that we have no heroes and heroines and certainly no role-models.

(d) *Medical Care.* The branch of medicine we are most concerned with is psychiatry. The American medical profession is oblivious to the needs of oppressed people, and psychiatrists are clearly hostile to homosexuality. They (not Freud) have created and spread the ideology that we are sick, neurotic, paranoid and other bullshit. Yet they never hesitate in taking money from brothers and sisters who are fed up with having to live in such a sick society, and who could use some honest advice. Because psychiatrists emphasize "adjustment" and conformity rather than liberation, because they tell us to become good citizens rather than good revolutionaries, because they favour individual solutions rather than social change, we recognize that they are not the helpers of homosexuals or any oppressed people, but serve our oppressors.

(iv) *Culture*

Although we have certainly contributed to the country's cultural life as a group we have been robbed of our culture. The culture of any period is defined by a ruling elite; and the rulers of America have defined homosexuals as outcasts. The culture available to us is clearly heterosexual and alienating to us. Athletics are based upon men competing with each other, one winning at the other's expense; while homosexual men relate by loving each other, not by competition. In movies or on TV women are always shown as objects of the love (?) of men, but homosexual women love each other; and the standards of female beauty, defined by society as what men want, is irrelevant to lesbians. Art, books, plays don't relate to homosexuality except in trying to say how it is.

As individuals we are prevented from cultural expression, for sexuality cannot be suppressed without suppression of personality at the same time. And our sexuality must be suppressed because of the legal, economic, and social penalties for it. We see culture not as the output of a few great men and women, but as a possession of all people and as activities (whether sports, hobbies or arts) which all people can participate in. In spite of the restrictions, homosexuals have, in fact, become artists, athletes, writers, but the masses of homosexuals have had no benefit from this fact. We have had to depend on the ruling elite who have taken over our talents and used them for their own profit, like the Kennedys who decorated their court with Gore Vidal. This is an expropriation of our cultural resources. We refuse to entertain them any longer with "camp" for their profit.

(v) *Class Status and Homosexuality*

Homosexuals from the proletariat (whether working class or lumpen) lead a particularly prison-like, straight-jacketed existence. Because of their particular relationship (actual or potential) to production, the custom is to marry at a young age. It is not surprising that white working-class communities are among the most up-tight about homosexuals due to the role of the family structure in the capitalist mode of production. Homosexuals from these communities often marry and have children before discovering their homosexuality. All the doors that can be opened by middle-class privilege are closed. The women cannot afford to follow their homosexual preferences; they are tied economically to men due to the low salaries and restricted job opportunities open to women in general. The men cannot afford divorce, support of their family and the expense of setting up a new life as a homosexual. Nor can they afford the notoriously high legal fees used to pay off the pigs, which keep middle-class and wealthy homosexuals out of jail.

(vi) *Sexual Capitalism*

(a) *Social attitudes.* The most frequently described grievance is the prejudice most homosexuals find in heterosexuals. Anti-homosexual feeling among the masses of Americans cannot be our ultimate problem; in fact straight people too are harmed by rigid, stereotyped ideas about sex and sex-roles. These ideas can only persist because of the institutions which support them; news media, entertainment media, schools, medical establishment, etc. These institutions are not owned by the people, and only a small minority profit from them. Certainly the masses of American people receive no long-range benefits from their contempt for homosexuals.

(b) *Psychological attitudes.* Possibly the most devastating aspect of these attitudes is that we learn them ourselves during our formative years and are therefore filled with self-contempt when we become homosexual. In American society, we are taught that people are supposed to get what they deserve rather than what they need. It is a "meritocracy," not a democracy. Translated into sexual life, we see how this defeats us. Through advertising and the entertainment media, artificial standards of beauty are learned and internalized. Youth, white Aryan aggressive "masculinity" and submissive "femininity" are constantly stressed.

We begin to act as though only certain "types" who approach

these phony standards deserve our love and sexual attention, and we become more and more unresponsive to people's needs for love and sex. We respond to what "turns us on," and we have learned to be "turned on" by merit and not by other's needs. Taking on, as individuals, the ethic of the capitalist system which despises the needs of the people, especially the poor and oppressed, we act against our own long-run interests. Those who do not approach the stereotypes because they may be older, homely, physically deformed, etc. may be among the most miserable and lonely people in society. And we do not even have the family structure which helps most people to help these lonely persons forget how unhappy they are.

Homosexuality as the most despised, most denied sexual activity must be treated with special care. The attempts by straight people and hostile homosexuals to understand the homosexual liberation movement are the most fitting form of reparation that can be made for centuries of abuse, torture and misery afflicted on those whose only "crime" was to feel affection for another of the same sex.

## 14

## Chris and Rich

The first homosexual marriage in Canada was conducted on 11 February 1971 in Winnipeg. Richard North, 22, and Chris Vogel, 26, exchanged vows in a ceremony at the Unitarian Church, officiated by the Rev. Norman Mailer. Unlike most heterosexual couples, Mr North and Mr Vogel opted for the proclamation of the banns, rather than attempting to secure a marriage licence.

However, when they sought registration of their marriage in order to make the marriage legal, Mr D.W. Matheson, Recorder of Vital Statistics for the province, in the Department of Vital Statistics, refused to register the marriage on the grounds that it was not valid. Consequently the couple filed legal proceedings in Winnipeg County Court, and an originating notice of motion was filed on their behalf. Named as the respondent in the action was Mr D.W. Matheson. Their registration bid was rejected by the Chief Judge of Winnipeg County Court, Mr A.R. Philip.

Marvin Samphir, Counsel for the Manitoba Attorney General's Department, said: "We cannot register this marriage because it does not fit the accepted definition of marriage." April Katz, Counsel for the couple, argued that the recorder had no right to decide the validity of the marriage. "Marriage documents do not specify the sex of the people who fill them out. Once the marriage documents are ascertained as having true answers, then the recorder must register the marriage," Mrs Katz said. She said the couple were married by a minister who was authorized to marry people and this marriage ceremony should be registered.

Mr Samphir counter-argued that it was the substance of the ceremony and not the authority of the minister that was in question. He said even though there was no statute definition of marriage, the development of marriage in the Christian world has evolved into the understanding that marriage is between one man and one

woman. But the couple insisted that "it's a fundamental part of our lives and in our society. Recognition of this fact takes the form of marriage. We feel the fact that homosexuals can't get married is a refusal of society and the government to recognize the validity of a homosexual relationship."

They have vowed to fight to the highest court until the marriage is recognized. I chanced to meet the couple at the University of Winnipeg. They were both handsome young men with deep masculine voices. And they both bore the stamp of excellent breeding and good education. Below is the interview I had with them.

*S.D.* I believe you both got married?

*Chris.* Yes, to each other!

*S.D.* Yes . . . I know. I daresay you caused a sensation.

*Chris.* That wasn't our only intention. We did something which to us seemed perfectly logical, and everyone else made a fuss.

*S.D.* It has certainly made its impact, and this may start a new trend.

*Rich.* Perhaps we did leave a blazing trail behind us (*smiling*), but this trail has served a very useful purpose.

*S.D.* Could you tell me something about this "useful purpose."

*Rich.* We wanted to force the government to recognize the equality of homosexual relationships with heterosexual relationships, and we wanted to educate our society about the truth about homosexuality, and we wanted to help other homosexual people to accept themselves openly and without shame and guilt.

*S.D.* But I'm sure you agree with me that it's a very unusual thing to do.

*Chris.* Unusual perhaps from a particular point of view. But we both see nothing wrong in it.

*S.D.* Oh, you got me wrong. I didn't mean to say that you've both done anything wrong. What I really mean is that this sort of thing has never been done before. When someone gets married, it has always been to a person of the opposite sex.

*Rich.* What if a person is not attracted to a member of the opposite sex?

*S.D.* Of course I see your point of view, but . . .

*Chris.* We're both homosexuals and we aren't ashamed of it.

*S.D.* I can't help but have been wondering is . . . you see you're both

homosexuals and you're both adjusted to this fact, and you've both accepted this way of life as your own choice, and in your country there's no legal ban on homosexuality.

*Rich.* Between two consulting adults.

*S.D.* Between two consulting adults . . . well then you see when you could have continued to live together as lovers, uninterrupted, it seems to me that your getting married has only served the purpose of creating a sensation, which may have had some social value, but I certainly don't see how it has been of any personal value to you.

*Chris and Rich looked at each other. Then Chris spoke.*

*Chris.* It's this way Mrs Devi.

*S.D.* Call me Shakuntala.

*Chris.* Sha . . . Sha . . . Sha . . . I don't think I could ever say it.

*S.D.* Try again. It's not so difficult, really Sha . . . kun . . . tala.

*Rich.* Sha . . . kun . . . tala. Shakuntala! I got it!

*Chris.* Sha . . . Sha . . . Shakuntala . . .

*S.D.* Shakuntala.

*Chris.* Shakuntala . . . tell me first of all, What's the definition of marriage?

*S.D.* What I've always thought of as marriage is that a man and a woman get married, make a home, have children, raise a family.

*Rich.* And live happily ever after!

*Chris.* You haven't said a word about love!

*S.D.* Well, I suppose in your country you first fall in love and then get married, but in my country love is expected to grow after marriage, you see!

*Rich.* I suppose the degree to which love grows depends a lot on the amount of money that changed hands as dowry!

*We all laughed together. Then there was silence for a few moments.*

*Chris.* The way we understand marriage in our society . . . the three reasons for marriage traditionally . . . love, companionship and children.

*Rich.* Love includes sex as well.

*S.D.* But surely, you don't think one of you is going to become pregnant!

*Chris.* I was going to come to that. Today not all couples who get married expect to have kids and raise a family. It's a matter of choice. Many just marry for love and companionship only. Do you

agree?

*S.D.* Oh yes, I do!

*Rich.* If it's all right for heterosexuals to marry for love and companionship, what is wrong if two men, who love each other decide to get married and make a home, in order to fulfil each other's desire for companionship?

*S.D.* But then why marry? I repeat the same question . . . of what personal value is this marriage?

*Chris.* It's very simple. If two heterosexuals who marry only for the sake of love and companionship are allowed to celebrate the event, why should we be debarred from the same type of celebrations, just because we belong to the same sex?

*S.D.* And why the ceremony?

*Chris.* Such a ceremony is celebration and acceptance by one's friends and relatives, of a person's most important relationship. It's specially important now for homosexual men and women to openly celebrate their relationships. The guilt and shame and concealment forced upon them by society has been very destructive to their relationship. And fear of exposure has prevented most homosexual people from having any significant relationship at all.

*S.D.* Oh, I see!

*Rich.* There are other things as well.

*S.D.* What other things, for example?

*Rich.* A man and a woman who get married, they're allowed to file a joint income-tax return and they get a lot of tax rebates. Then they are allowed to buy a home.

*Chris.* When they buy a home, they're allowed to use both their incomes as security towards the mortgage on the home.

*S.D.* But it's not the same thing!

*Chris & Rich.* Why not!

*S.D.* Because, somehow I've always thought of marriage as being between a man and a woman and suddenly if I hear that two men get married, or for that matter two women get married, well I hope you don't mind my putting it this way . . . but it's shocking!

*Chris.* Its shocking to you because you've been conditioned from the time you were born to think that sexual love can exist only between a man and a women, and therefore marriage can be only between a man and women. You've never been allowed to

think in any other way.

*I looked at Rich. He was serious now.*

*Rich.* I agree with Chris. According to the Christian Church, and consequently in Western society, recognition is given only to heterosexual expression of sex and homosexual expression is not even considered!

*Chris.* No I think it's considered Rich, but in a very negative sort of a way.

*Rich.* Yes perhaps, in an effort to destroy that expression.

*S.D.* Do you feel persecuted?

*Chris.* Why not? When we're in fact being persecuted!

*S.D.* I'm going to raise that point a little later, but in the meantime coming back to your marriage, what significance do you think this would hold for people in general?

*Chris.* Here we can't speak of people in general—we should speak of heterosexuals and homosexuals. There're millions of homosexuals who are an invisible minority. They grow up alone in the midst of the heterosexual world.

*S.D.* Do you mean to say there's a heterosexual world, and a homosexual world . . . different worlds?

*Chris.* Unfortunately that is, and is not the case. There're homosexual people in every family, every community, and every occupation. But most of these people are too afraid of public censure to ever admit that they're homosexual, or that they have ever had a homosexual relationship. Those who do have relationships must hide themselves within a sort of underworld, being forced to maintain a double existence.

*S.D.* Chris, you really don't mean, I hope, that even after the legal ban on homosexuality has been lifted, you're not able to live peacefully.

*Rich.* Where is the 'peace'? How can we live in peace when we are discriminated against?

*S.D.* What sort of discrimination?

*Rich.* The very fact that we aren't allowed to get married . . . isn't that a discrimination? Earlier on you asked us about persecution.

*S.D.* Yes I did and I was going to bring up the point now. Now that the law has no bar on homosexuality, why should you feel persecuted?



*Chris.* You must be kidding!

*Rich.* Now that the law is amended, the police don't harass us so much, but the public attitude hasn't certainly altered very much.

*S.D.* How can they still persecute you officially?

*Chris.* Take for example the immigration regulations. In both the USA and Canada, a person will be prevented from entering the country and an immigrant will be deported if it's determined that he or she is a homosexual. Homosexual parents are often deprived of their children when it's discovered that they're homosexuals. Homosexuals are prevented from being employed in the armed forces and in the higher Civil Service, because it's said that they may be liable to blackmail. Of course, like the other laws, this applies only to individuals detected as being homosexuals, and in this case, the law itself is responsible for the dangerous position of the homosexual.

*Rich.* Of course there're many homosexuals in the Civil Service and the armed forces, and they're liable to blackmail simply because of the existence of the law.

*S.D.* It sounds like a vicious circle!

*Rich.* Absolutely, and there's still much social discrimination. I've been looking for a job for some time now. And I've been turned down everywhere. They give you one excuse or the other. There's a Human Rights Act here, which protects the civil right in employment and housing of other minority groups. But this Act doesn't protect homosexuals.

*S.D.* Are you sure they've turned you down only because you're a homosexual?

*Rich.* None of them have told me so. But I'm almost sure.

*S.D.* How do they know you're homosexual unless you tell them?

*Rich.* I tell them.

*S.D.* That's funny. When I go around meeting people in connection with my work, I don't tell them 'I'm Shakuntala Devi, a heterosexual'.

*Chris.* That's because you're assumed to be a heterosexual.

*S.D.* But I don't think it makes any difference, and people don't go round declaring their sex habits unnecessarily!

*Rich.* On the contrary, I don't go around declaring my sex habits unnecessarily.

*S.D.* Then do you mean to say that people just look you in the

eye and ask you if you are a homosexual or a heterosexual?

*Rich.* I don't go around declaring my sexual habits unnecessarily either, but it always comes up in some context or other. Often it's because I'm not doing the things that heterosexual people take for granted, such as dating and marrying a young woman. When I'm seeking employment, they often ask me if I'm married, or if I've a girl friend, and what my plans are about marriage. Heterosexual people declare their sexuality to others every day, but they're so used to it that they don't realize it.

Also, since I'm active in the Gay Liberation movement, and have been successful in obtaining grants to do research and publish information on homosexuality, this often comes up. Employers always want to know what jobs I've had, how I've spent the last few years, and what experience I have. As soon as they hear that I've been involved in these projects during the summer vacation to distribute truthful information on homosexuality, they want to know if I'm homosexual. Suddenly it seems to be important to them.

*S.D.* Then do you have to tell them you're a homosexual.

*Rich.* Oh God, do you expect me to tell a lie!

*Chris.* Do you expect us to live the rest of our lives telling lies and hiding ourselves in an underworld like thieves and criminals!

*S.D.* Sorry, I should not have said it. I do apologize.

*There was a tense silence for a few moments. Then I spoke.*

*S.D.* I hope you don't mind if I ask you a few personal questions.

*Chris.* Not at all. Go ahead.

*S.D.* You both, when you got married, was it understood between you two as to which one of you was going to play the role of the husband and which one was going to be the wife?

*Chris.* Playing the role of a husband *(imitating laughter)* Ha . . . ha . . . what do you think, we're play-acting or something?

*S.D. (defensively).* When two people marry, there's always a husband and a wife.

*Rich.* That's the heterosexual concept of marriage.

*Chris.* You heterosexuals always think that yours is the only right kind of sexual relationship and give no cognizance to any other kind of sexual relationship, don't you?

*S.D.* Look here now, I'm no spokeswoman for the rest of the heterosexual community of the world but that's how I've understood marriage always.

*Chris.* Because that's what always has been drummed into your head!

*S.D.* I hope you do understand that I come from another culture altogether and our social structure is completely different! There's very little of this in my country.

*Rich.* Oh yeah!

*Chris.* Have you any statistics to prove that?

*S.D.* Why no! But we hear very little about it. I daresay quite truthfully I've never heard the subject being discussed so openly, as they do here.

*Chris.* I agree with you that you probably don't discuss these subjects "openly" in your country. For that matter do you discuss heterosexual sex quite openly in your country?

*S.D.* Why . . . no!

*Rich.* Should we then conclude that heterosexual sex also doesn't exist in your country?

*Chris.* Not if we're to believe the exploding population figure in your country, if what we read in the papers is true.

*Rich.* The country of *Kama-sutra*.

*Chris.* And the carvings in the temple . . . Ajanta, Ellora . . . Puri.

*Rich.* Khajuraho!

*S.D.* Those are all ancient carvings you see.

*Chris.* We don't deny for a moment that these things have been handed down to you from ancient times.

*Rich.* Oh Chris, where's that book of poems you had? Do you remember that passage from some Hindu epic praising the love between man and man, and woman and woman?

*Chris.* I returned that to the library this morning . . . too bad!

*S.D.* Is there such a book? I've never seen it. I've never even heard about it.

*Chris.* If you can say that . . . pardon me but either you're being naive or hypocritical.

*S.D.* Well!

*Chris.* I'm sorry for having had to say it . . . but that's the way I feel about it.

*S.D.* Don't worry, I'm not hurt. You were just being honest.

*There was a shocked silence for a few moments. They both looked at me and I looked at them. Then Rich spoke.*

*Rich.* Oh by the way, some time back, you asked us which one of

us is the husband and which one the wife in this marriage.

*S.D.* I did, and I didn't get a direct answer. I was side tracked.

*Rich.* The answer is very simple. We're not trying to imitate a heterosexual marriage. Our relationship is different from the traditional heterosexual one, at least to the extent that we don't play sex roles. We divide rights, responsibilities, and work on a strictly fifty-fifty basis.

*Chris.* In heterosexual relationships, it's usually understood that the man takes the dominant role and the woman must play the submissive role. Freedoms, privileges, and opportunities are unfairly divided.

*Rich.* And the woman is forced into a life-style that's much less stimulating and rewarding.

*Chris.* Many heterosexual couples are also discovering that both their lives are more fulfilling and enjoyable if the rights and responsibilities of all sorts in their lives are shared equally.

*S.D.* But then you don't really have a family life!

*Chris.* If you can see beyond the gender of our partners, you'll see that homosexual couples have all the advantages of family stability; a home, domestic responsibilities, mutual concern for each other's welfare and the benefits of close companionship with someone you love.

*S.D.* I hope you don't mind if I ask you another very personal question.

*Chris.* Go ahead!

*S.D.* In a traditional marriage, the man is usually the breadwinner, and the woman keeps the home. In your case how do you distribute work?

*Chris.* Really, we both share both roles. But we can be more flexible. One of us goes to university or takes time off from work, as Rich has done to build furniture for us. Oh by the way, these bookshelves you see around here, Shakuntala, Rich built them this autumn.

*Chris pointed out to the bookshelves in a light coloured wood, set against the walls round the sitting room.*

*Rich (smiling).* I've not yet finished painting them.

*S.D.* They look quite beautiful just as they are, why do you want to paint them.

*Rich.* They'll look more finished, and will be a lot more durable.

But to return to the subject of our discussion, I wanted to remind you of the oppressive nature of the woman's role in the traditional marriage.

*S.D.* Go ahead!

*Rich.* She's entirely dependent on her husband for income and security. Surely the role she performs in society is very important. Why should she not be guaranteed a certain income?

*Chris.* I think that many opportunities for the use of a woman's talents are wasted, because her potentialities may not fall into those areas defined as woman's work.

*S.D.* I suppose that's all being tackled by the Women's Liberation movement.

*Chris.* The women's movement has been very important in reducing the damage done by traditional sex roles and allowing women a freer and a more satisfactory life-style.

*Rich.* They're also changing the concept of marriage and family.

*S.D.* Has your marriage been accepted properly by everybody?

*Rich.* No, not by everybody!

*Chris.* In the newspapers and on radio and television, it was given a partially neutral and partially positive treatment. The general public—I mean the man in the street—was interviewed by some of the television stations. Some of those people took quite a reasonable and accepting attitude, but of course there were others who were quite hostile.

*Rich.* Incidentally, did you know that the Office of Vital Statistics refused to register our marriage?

*S.D.* Oh really, what did you do about that?

*Chris.* We appealed that decision, but the appeal judge went against us by consulting some dictionaries which said that marriage could consist only of one man and one woman.

*Rich.* Of course the judge relied upon a very traditional concept of marriage in reaching his decision.

*S.D.* I see!

*Chris.* You do realize what this means?

*S.D.* In what way?

*Chris.* If our society comes to accept homosexuality as being equal in nature to heterosexuality, so that it no longer matters what a person's sexual orientation is, then there'll be many all-round benefits, for everyone.

### Chris and Rich

*S.D.* How?

*Chris.* Homosexual people would then be able to have happy and satisfactory relationships with members of their own sex, instead of being obliged to conceal their true feelings and being forced to enter into heterosexual relationships, which often have unfortunate outcomes for everyone involved. Much anxiety, anguish, poisoned relationships, and much wastage of human potential will be avoided.

*Rich.* Heterosexual people too will be able to avoid fear of homosexuality.

*S.D.* What kind of a fear of homosexuality?

*Rich.* Many heterosexuals are afraid that they might be considered to be homosexuals . . . or that they might be in fact latent homosexuals.

*Rich.* They also fear that homosexuals may have a destructive effect on society, which comes from the many misconceptions which are popularly held about homosexuality. These fears surrounding homosexuality cause unnecessary anxiety, sexual repression and loss of much valuable human potential.

*S.D.* What exactly do you want society to do for you then?

*Chris.* We simply want to be integrated into society as normal, healthy individuals who are homosexually oriented. Of course, homosexual people are integrated into society at present, but only so long as they pretend to be heterosexually-oriented.

*S.D.* If you expect society to accept you in this fashion, let me ask you an honest question: Have your respective families accepted you in the first place? What's their opinion?

*Rich.* Well, my parents were at the wedding ceremony.

*S.D.* Really!

*Rich.* Although it was difficult for my parents to accept our openness about our relationship, at first, since this resulted in causing embarrassment to them . . . now they've welcomed us into the family.

*S.D.* How about your family, Chris?

*Chris.* Well my family found that embarrassment was more easily overcome by adopting a positive stand. Generally, I feel that an open attitude and realistic information is very successful in changing people's attitudes on the question.

*S.D.* That's interesting!

*Rich.* Oh, by the way, I've, recently read some books on Hindu

religion and philosophy . . . *Upanishads*, *Dhammapada* . . . and I'm a great admirer of Dr S. Radhakrishnan. What I admire about Hindu religion is that unlike Christianity, which imposes a very narrow and a repressive restriction on human behaviour, the Hindu religion emphasizes free expression and fulfilment.

*Chris*. I agree. From what I've read of Hinduism, it fosters a very tolerant outlook and gives a man a chance to form his own individual personality.

*S.D.* But I understand that Christian churches are also reforming their views in this matter. Good God, you know what time it is? I must be getting along. I've an early morning appointment!

*Chris*. I'll run you back to your place in our car.

*(Following my interview with Chris and Rich, I called on Mrs April Katz, who represented them in their legal action. Mrs Katz, who is practising as a Barrister and Solicitor in Winnipeg, is also the staff attorney with the Legal Aid Service Society of Manitoba. Below is a statement given by her.)*

"I think the whole case indicates the ambivalence of present-day society in dealing with the question of sexual orientation. It is obvious from speaking with people and the public reaction to the case as a whole that relatively few people expressed discomfort in discussing the subject. The point of the case in Canada is reflective of our constitutional division of power under the British North America Act and the constitutional issue, of course, is a current and valid one. No matter what the topic area is, there continues to be a battle between Provincial and Federal supremacy in various aspects of our legislation. However, more specifically on the question of homosexuality it is merely a further indication of the lack of readiness of any jurisdiction to take any position in legislation over homosexuality. Currently there appears to be no legislation. The provisions in the Criminal Code making it illegal to be a homosexual have been removed. Committing a homosexual act continues to be a ground for a divorce, but mostly to protect the individual who is caught in a marriage to someone who is bi-sexual. Generally speaking the legislative bodies are backing out of any legislation pertaining to homosexuality.

The points in favour of Chris and Richard's position is that this ambivalence may well lead to a gradual acceptance, or perhaps already reflects some acceptance of the fact that some people have a different sexual orientation which is not going to be corrected by medical treatment and no longer merits being regarded as a mental disease, but is reflective of an orientation that society must learn to live with.

In addition, there were relatively few people who were violently opposed to Chris and Richard having the right to live together, the attitude being one of live and let live, "so long as it does not interfere with my day-to-day life, I have no personal objection." I hope that this attitude will lead to more acceptance as time goes by and that at least they are in a position now to know what legislative changes need to be made in order to effect their overall purpose."

*(Mrs Leslie Silver is Director of the Women's Centre of Winnipeg. She is happily married and lives with her husband Mr George Silver, in a private apartment in the suburbs of Winnipeg. Reproduced is her statement with regard to Chris and Rich.)*

"I feel that adults should have the right, and the freedom to exercise that right, to determine their own special preferences, and to choose their partners accordingly from among like-minded people. The private relationship between two cognizant and consenting adults, be they heterosexual or homosexual should not be subject to public interference.

Marriage is no longer primarily a vehicle of procreation. It is becoming, more and more, a relationship entered into by people who wish to share their lives, their work and interests, and to exchange companionship and love. I see no reason why homosexuals should not be able to exchange vows of commitment to each other which is really what a marriage ceremony is—as heterosexuals do.

The many homosexuals and lesbians I know are people quite like anyone else—people who have responsible work that they enjoy, friends and a wide variety of interests and hobbies, who have the same basic needs as heterosexuals for deep affection and a supportive and caring relationship with someone else. To deny them

the right to seek these things is to condemn them to loneliness, unhappiness, and in some cases, to an extreme guilt and self-hatred because they don't conform to other people's concepts of what is 'normal' or 'right' behaviour, and I can see no moral or human reason for such unhappiness."

*(The following interview is with Barbara Scales who is partowner of a book shop that sells books and magazines mainly on homosexuality and on homosexual liberation, in Montreal, Canada. Miss Scales is a candidate for the M.A. in Philosophy at Sir George Williams University, Montreal.)*

*S.D.* You're running this shop and I take it that you're a part owner. What's the aim?

*Barbara.* To provide a source of writings and materials by people in Montreal and other parts of the world on these social issues. Hopefully the availability of this material to people in Montreal will provide a cultural media for people in the gay and feminist communities. And to enlighten the general public as far as they are willing to be.

*S.D.* Do you find that the general public isn't very well informed about the gay people.

*Barbara.* Yes I do. People have developed their own myths and characterizations regarding homosexuals and homosexuality. These are usually negative and allow individuals to think about homosexuality without themselves feeling involved. This backfires however, when an individual is confronted, or becomes aware of homosexual feelings that he or she might have. The problem then becomes how to resolve the grotesque characterizations with their natural and pleasant feelings.

*S.D.* I see!

*Barbara.* Oh by the way, may I ask a question? What's the status of homosexuality in India?

*S.D.* Well, I'm not so sure. But I think there's a law against homosexuality in India. But I personally have never heard, or read in the papers about anyone being prosecuted under this law.

*Barbara.* The same thing is said here about the immigration restriction on homosexuals. The Government didn't want to change

the law, for a very long time claiming that nobody was ever prosecuted. However, when a law stands on the books, whether it's used or not, it has its effects. The fear of discovery for people in high places is unnatural and intimidating to them. What might be a conventional social bias is reinforced by such a law and the inclusion of homosexuality under the rubric of crime is an offence to some of the very strongest and most positive passions people are capable of.

The social prejudice and official illegality of homosexuality has caused more than a few people misery in their lives from a sense of alienation, isolation and social sin. Anti-homosexual conventions and laws have been endlessly destructive, leaving many with no alternative but suicide. But one shouldn't think that homosexuals by nature are unhappy people. In communities where they're accepted even with provisions, they can be and are happy and socially responsible people.

*S.D.* Do you really feel that passionate love combined with sincere, selfless affection can exist between two people of the same sex, like it does between two people of opposite sexes.

*Barbara.* I think instances of true passion and selfless affection are all too rare, but it's just as possible that they would exist between homosexual lovers as between heterosexual lovers. In fact as things are at the moment I should say that the odds are with homosexual relationships to achieve what we consider love. Heterosexual relationships are generally patterned on the model of marriage, which is an elaborate economic and social arrangement in which love usually plays a secondary role.

Homosexual relationships don't have this as a model and are likely to generate from true feelings of affection. As well, there is a greater possibility for understanding between people who are treated in similar ways in society. When members of the same sex are able to overcome the competitive sexual and social attitudes they have towards each other, they may be able to understand and identify with each other more successfully than members of opposite sexes.

Even if there were greater uniformity in the treatment of the two sexes in society, most likely there would still be greater empathy between members of the same sex than members of opposite sexes. The experiences of living in one's body are sufficiently different between the sexes for there to be misunderstandings of the opposite

sex. There are many examples in literature of strong passionate and or selflessly affectionate homosexual relationships to answer the question of its possibility.

*S.D.* What exactly do you think society should do to right the wrong?

*Barbara.* Society works on many levels. As individuals, people must revise their conception of homosexuals. That's for the sake of people who already are aware that they're homosexuals. They also might make the effort to recognize their own feelings of attraction to members of their own sex. And to honestly appraise the heterosexual relationships which they have called "love." This is for themselves in the hope of placing the priority in their own lives on love, rather than the fulfilment of social conventions.

Homosexuality should be discussed in the classroom as openly as heterosexuality, and homosexual relationships should be given the same stature as heterosexual ones. As far as the laws are concerned, there's no question that laws against homosexuality are misguided, and that every effort to insure the freedom and equality of homosexuals should be made.

In Quebec, we are petitioning the Government for the inclusion of 'sexual orientation' in the Bill of Rights. This would insure that legally there could be no discrimination against homosexuals. Christopher Isherwood has said that the difference between homosexuality and heterosexuality would diminish if society found them equally acceptable. Ultimately, homosexuals will want to be accepted and left alone to pursue good lives, as other people do.

## 15

## An Indian Homosexual

*Sashi, aged 31, lives in Poona. His father is a highly cultured and a well read man. Through him I had the occasion to meet Sashi. At their request his real name is withheld.*

*S.D.* When did you first become aware that you had a feeling of attraction to members of the same sex?

*S.W.* When I was 15 years old.

*S.D.* Did you have any specific emotional or psychological problems when you realized that you were different from others?

*S.W.* Yes. I could not mix with other boys, and I felt aloof. Other boys could freely talk of sex as their sexual impulse was quite normal, but I had to keep my feelings to myself. Because instinctively I knew that it was something unnatural to be attracted towards my own sex. I could not concentrate on my studies after higher secondary. I was diffident. I took a longer time to make decisions. By the way I am a graduate.

*S.D.* What about the boys in your class? Did they come to know about your sexuality? And how did they react?

*S.W.* Outwardly, as you can see, I am quite masculine, though I have scant hair on my face. And I don't have feminine mannerisms. I take interest in cricket which I can play well. I pretended to be normal. I talked about girls now and then and concealed my real feelings. In this way no one ever came to know that I was a homo. In college one boy made friendship with me. He was 'normal'. Yet we used to be together most of the time. Due to close association he started suspecting about my 'real' feelings. Yet I never confessed them to anyone, because I knew that my friends would certainly laugh at me and make fun of me. My only problem was that I could never relax and mix in society.

*S.D.* What about your teachers? Did they know you were gay?

S.W. I never went close to any teacher except one or two. In their case also I adopted the same policy as I told you already. No teacher therefore came to know.

S.D. Did your parents know that you were a homosexual? And what was their reaction?

S.W. No, only at twenty-eight, I myself told my father because marriage proposals started coming. He did not believe it and brushed it aside saying "You feel that way now, but wait till you marry. Then you will feel attracted towards a woman." According to him I was fit for marriage because I could achieve erection and could ejaculate semen. But he did not believe that only men and not women could sexually arouse me. He insisted on marriage. I faced the dilemma 'Should I marry or should I not?'

I wanted to marry because without marriage there was no social status. There would be problems of loneliness, food, nursing during illness and the rest. Ultimately I sought psychiatric aid at the age of twenty eight. The doctor gave me psychotherapy. After about ten sessions, my sexual preference still remained the same. Then at the age of thirty-one I again sought his as well as some other psychiatrist's advice and decided not to marry. He has suggested I try the newly developed behavioural therapy but I don't know whether I really want to change.

S.D. Have you read any books on homosexuality? What is your evaluation of them?

S.W. I have read many English books on homosexuality, and I liked them. From them I learnt that there were many people like me. I liked the sympathetic and unbiased manner in which the problem was discussed. Yet these books alone cannot change public opinion. Something more is necessary.

S.D. What are your ideas about marriage, family and children?

S.W. Marriage, family and children are good for heterosexuals. But for homosexuals there cannot be heterosexual marriage. I would like to get married to a homo. But I must be able to select my partner just as a wife is selected. Even then infidelity scares me. Yet the idea of living life all alone frightens me.

S.D. What are your problems in being a homosexual in a heterosexual society?

S.W. Problem of ridicule. People laugh at you if they come to know that you are gay. People look down upon such people cal-

ling them "seventh letter," "number six" and such things. Even if such people have talent, are intelligent, socially useful, they are not respected at all. Of course some homos are partly responsible for this attitude. Hatred of homosexuality was probably justifiable in ancient times. But in modern society it should be accepted.

S.D. How do you deal with this problem?

S.W. I try to mix in society. I think I am beginning to accept myself. I have fewer problems now as regards mixing with people. I am settled in my job where I get about Rs 1000 a month. I am involved in amateur theatrics and I enjoy reading. Incidentally I have so far written and published about twelve stories and poems in Marathi. I have also written and published poems. Killing time is no problem. I have a steady friend who is a bisexual. He is happily married, but is emotionally involved with me. Though I don't love him much I have respect and regard for him. I trust him and feel relaxed and comfortable in his company.

S.D. What are your plans for the future?

S.W. The future at times frightens me. Leading life all alone. Nobody to take care for you! Moreover I am dependent by nature. Yet there is hope that someday I will find someone with whom I will share my life.

*(Mr Srinivasa Raghavachariar is a Sanskrit scholar and the priest of a Vaishnavite temple at Shri Rangam. Married at the age of fourteen to a girl of eight, he is the father of thirteen children. Now sixty-eight, he lives in his ancestral home at Shri Rangam with his wife and widowed daughter. I interviewed him to get his views on homosexuality in general.)*

S.R. I belong to the old school of thought and my views are very orthodox. In fact, in my days, the very discussion of sex as a subject was unheard of. And to sit down and discuss it with a member of the opposite sex would have been considered most horrifying.

S.D. Sorry I'm causing you the embarrassment.

S.R. Not at all. I understand that you're involved in a serious study of the subject and I'm glad to give you my honest and frank views on the matter. Let me also tell you one more thing. In my days, there was such a cloud of secrecy surrounding sex activities that

most of the time young people were kept in the dark about the actual facts of life. This was very damaging, but today things are changing.

*S.D.* Do you think things are changing for the better?

*S.R.* In some ways, yes. We're living in a more dynamic age.

*S.D.* What do you think of homosexuality?

*S.R.* I attribute it entirely to reincarnation.

*S.D.* Reincarnation?

*S.R.* Yes. This clearly proves the Hindu theory of reincarnation.

*S.D.* How? I'm surprised.

*S.R.* The explanation is very simple. These men and women who're now attracted to members of their own sex, were in their previous incarnations lovers, belonging to the opposite sex. In this birth, though the sex might change, the soul remains the same, and the power of the soul transcends all bodily limitations and tries to reach out for the beloved.

*S.D.* What a fascinating theory! I've never thought of it that way.

*S.R.* That's the only possible explanation there is. Otherwise there's no logical reason why a man should be attracted to another man and a woman to another woman.

*S.D.* Do you think love could be that powerful?

*S.R.* Most certainly I do. I've been happily married to my wife for the past fifty-four years. If I didn't have her back as my wife in my next life, or for that matter, for all my lives to come, I'd be completely lost. I'd go on searching for her.

*S.D.* What else can you say about the subject?

*S.R.* Homosexuality is also a design of Nature.

*S.D.* In what way?

*S.R.* Earth is overpopulated by the human species and the Earth Mother—Bhooma Devi—is no longer able to carry the burden. So this is one of Mother Nature's way of combating the population explosion. Nature will not allow any species to dominate completely. And we've made great strides forward toward elimination of all disease. Eminent pediatricians have forecast that a child born today may very well have a life expectancy of a hundred years. You must admit this would upset the ecological balance. Flies and mosquitoes live just as long today and no longer than they did a thousand years ago. The same is true of elephants, chimpanzees, cockroaches and

even oak trees. It's only man who has acquired the ability to prolong his life span.

*S.D.* I see.

*S.R.* What's more, the sly human is exterminating vitally important insect, plant, and even mammalian life in order to make life for himself more luxurious. This of course, you understand, creates an unnatural imbalance in the life pattern.

*S.D.* There are also other practical problems. Experts have decreed that in a hundred years or less, we won't be able to feed the population at that time unless we devise some other means of growing food.

*S.R.* There's also mankind's pressing and overriding desire to reach out to other planets. These are all Mother Earth's plans to relieve herself of the burden of the mass of humanity.

*S.D.* How extraordinary.

*S.R.* All we can do is to sit back and wonder at the divine tricks of the Almighty!



## In Retrospect

Homosexuals have always had to play a negative role in society. This negative role has been imposed upon them. Moral thinking about homosexuality began with the presupposition that the culturally conditioned heterosexuality was the very essence of the human and at the very core of the mature human personality. And this very assumption blinds society to any evidence that a homosexual relationship can be a truly constructive and mature expression of human love.

Most moralists seize on the outdated psychiatric opinion that the homosexuality of a child is due to faulty parental relations and thereby place an unproven burden of guilt on parents. Recent researches in psychology and psychiatry have, however, proved this opinion to be without grounds. It has been proved baseless to judge parents somehow guilty for their son's or daughter's homosexual condition—but there may well be a base for seeing them responsible for the neurotic or disturbed condition that frequently accompanies homosexuality. Thereby the main moral problem that exists for the parents of a homosexual son or daughter is one of understanding, love, and acceptance. There is no logical reason for the parents of a homosexual to assume guilt for their child's condition.

Given a simple choice no man or woman, in the right mind, would opt for the life of a sexual deviant. No one would like to put herself or himself in the position of an object of ridicule and contempt. No one would like to be denied the fulfillments of ordinary family life, and be cut off from the mainstream of human interests. In fact a great many confirmed homosexuals deplore their fate. But self-interest and self-determination seem powerless to effect a change and convert a homosexual to a heterosexual way of life.

Most therapists do not care to admit how often their professional

efforts prove futile. But psychiatrists with the widest experience propound the views that there is no evidence that the intensely homosexual drives can alter course. And they stress on the advisability of the psychiatrists to concentrate on making the patient a better adjusted homosexual than to aspire to convert him to heterosexuality. Some authorities go even as far as to say that the attempted "treatment" to alternate the basic personality of an inborn homosexual can only be described as a moral outrage!

Whatever the causes of homosexuality, whether the homosexuals can or cannot help what they are, the question is whether or not society in general has any basis to condemn them to a life of semi-hiding, and as a result keep under cover or to deny completely a vital and a valuable part of themselves.

Clinical questions have little relevance in the context of freedom from oppression and dehumanization. Immorality does not consist in being different. It consists in not allowing others to be so. It is not the individual whose sexual relations depart from the social custom who is immoral—but those are immoral who would penalize him for being different. A law-abiding citizen who respects the rights and dignities of others, if he is made to suffer merely for deviating from the conventional norm, is not the offender—he is the victim.

Never having been offered positive attitudes to homosexuality, homosexuals inevitably adopt negative ones and it is from these that all their values flow. Self-hatred becomes ingrained in their attitude and devious and complex are the means by which homosexuals come to terms with the dilemma of suppressing the evidence of their homosexuality.

Many deviants misguidedly enter marital relationships in the hope of "curing" themselves and also in order to escape detection. But this can turn out a life-long disaster, particularly for the other person involved. Psychiatrists who advise a homosexual to marry, trying to convert an unsuitable case, are not only wrong but also wicked! A man whose inclinations are predominantly homosexual may succeed for a time in the performance of his marital duties—perhaps by conjuring up homosexual thoughts during intercourse—but he is unlikely to make a permanently satisfactory husband emotionally or physically. The confirmed homosexual, no matter how hard he may try to remain faithful to his marriage, tends sooner or

later to lapse into his old habits.

The homosexual who embarks upon marriage generally does not want the spouse to know about the problem. But if the wife discovers it by accident, the emotional shock may lead to bitterest recriminations, the break up of the marriage and home, and perhaps public exposure. And in instances where the deviant may confide in his prospective spouse his problem, even if she does know and does understand the situation, it is likely that she may deceive herself that the conversion of a confirmed homosexual is simply a matter of practice. She may think that personal charms and her affection will easily wean a man from his deviant sexual practice. But most established homosexuals can never be won over by feminine influence. Finding that her efforts to attract her husband seem merely to irritate and worry him the wife might become resentful and disillusioned. And moreover neither the homosexual himself nor his prospective spouse may comprehend the depth of the aversion to the opposite sex, or the fact that when it comes to the point of living together, the repulsion may be found to encompass a great many aspects of life beside the matter of genital contacts.

There are instances, of course, though very rare, where the most surprising combinations have succeeded. In these cases, however, the motive for the marriage is important. Some homosexual men enter into marriage with older women who need merely an outlet for their motherliness, and are prepared to accept a platonic relationship. And there are other homosexuals who marry lesbians and come to a sort of comradesly understanding about their sexual adventures. These marriages are however based on feelings of comradeship or mutual ambition to rear a family and do not fit in with the popular image of marriage.

It was with the advent of Christianity that the repression of homosexuality really began, although Christ said nothing about the subject. The Western view of homosexuality has been guided by the attitudes of the church. Early church leaders condemned homosexuality because God destroyed Sodom. Other texts suggest that homosexuality was associated with heathen worship. But more fundamental is the precept that sexual relationships are only permissible within marriage and then only for procreative purposes. This provides the basis of essentially heterosexual, family oriented society. Seen in this context the homosexual represents a threat to

the family structure on one hand, and an example, on the other, of sexual activity as inevitably sterile and therefore as mere physical indulgence.

What we know is that many decent, intelligent, moral and apparently normal people find their own sex more exciting than the opposite sex. They are found in all walks of life and in all professions—not a few of them among the priesthood of the church of England. If homosexuals want to live within the discipline of society, what does the society expect them to do? Live a life of total celibacy? Most people prefer not to do this. And most people like to find in life what happiness they can.

People respond differently to the implication that their sexual implications are "wicked." Some do pay the heavy price of total celibacy, but others refusing to deny their deepest feelings whatever names others give to them, embark upon relationships with their own sex. But, because the atmosphere of "sin" clings around such practice, sadly many still feel a need to conceal their sexual orientation from their families or from friends they do not yet know well enough to trust. Most homosexuals resent the heavy burden of guilt they have been asked to carry. The aggressively brazen behaviour and outrageous manners some homosexuals affect are thought of as typical of the warped personality of the homosexuals. But in fact they are the characteristics regularly found among all rejected groups. They are really "traits of victimisation"—that is, defensive responses to a hostile world.

Homosexuals at all times live in constant fear of discovery because the penalties of disclosure are so heavy. And the individual's whole personality becomes conditioned by the fact of a particular sexual preference in a society that condemns it. Since humans are creatures of society more than of impulse, permanent social censure is bound to distort an individual and he becomes over-sensitive, even paranoiac, self-conscious, self-centred, unnecessarily aggressive, suspicious, abrupt and aloof.

Perpetual hiding makes a person a fugitive even in his own life, his traits formed and developed by a hostile society. Few escape these effects. Most show traits common to minorities, severely persecuted minorities. And they become parodies of themselves blatantly reproducing society's worst expectations of them.

Because their love is considered dirty and degrading, they well

make it so. They will make it even more dirty and degrading than the righteous could imagine. They will punish society. They take over society's role and punish themselves more brutally than society ever could. In old age when they can no longer fight society their view of life changes and what in heterosexuals are disillusioned expectations become bitter cynicism or self-pitying hopelessness in homosexuals.

So the wheel is kept turning!

An important question that arises in the thinking members of society is—must then these millions who already exist and tens of millions yet to be born be condemned to the misery, loneliness and degradation which being different almost always means in our culture? How far can we salvage those who may have been already damaged by moral isolation and despair throughout a life-time? Even if we are not able to help them much can we not at least make certain that there will be no new victims of intolerance and ignorance in the future?

Public disapproval is based on lack of knowledge and an unwillingness on the part of society to tolerate anything that does not conform to its family based heterosexual structure. This has to change. Homosexuals should not be pressurized to simulate "straight" roles which violate their true selves and homosexual liaisons should not have to be kept hidden. It is time to get out of the business of being judgmental about our fellow humans and it is important to take a stand in support of homosexual's freedom from discrimination and persecution.

And there is a need to point out that only a very small minority of homosexuals are involved in behaviour which attains notoriety such as attempted seduction of inexperienced boys or compulsory sexuality in public places. If homosexual practices were not subject to criminal prosecution and relegated to a twilight world, the exploitation by desperate individuals of fellow humans would be far less prevalent. Exploitation flourishes in a climate where honesty cannot operate.

In India, however, it is impossible for the homosexual to state his case, while the activity itself is criminal and the individual himself regarded as an abnormal freak. But in the UK a major turning point came in 1967 when the reforming Sexual Offences Act legalized the private homosexual relationships of two consenting male adults

over 21 years old. Law reform in the UK has provided the needed legal foundation for free expression of the homosexual's point of view on which progress, understanding, acceptance, and ultimate social integration may be built.

The time is overdue now, in our own society, when rather than pretending that homosexuals don't exist, or hoping to eradicate them by sheer weight of disapproval or prison sentences, we face the facts square in the eyes and find room for them so that they can live unfettered and unmolested, and make their contribution to the common good of the community.

Attempts to combat homosexuality by legal and social discrimination have only tended to exaggerate the very troubles they set out to combat. Treatment through imprisonment is actually a contradiction in terms. The justification of prison sentences for homosexuality is generally based on the grounds that loss of liberty provides impetus for conversion to heterosexuality. This justification, however, ignores the very elementary facts of the matter. And the justification that punishment acts as a deterrent to potential offenders is again absurd, because even in periods when detection meant death the practice was known to be widespread. Through the ages homosexuals have been burned, hanged, beheaded, castrated, flogged, tortured, pilloried and suffocated, and it was considered appropriate that the homosexual monarch Edward II should be murdered by the introduction of a red-hot poker into his anus. The sex impulse knows nothing of man-made law.

For the individual who is incarcerated, segregation in an overcrowded jail serves only to encourage his homosexual practices. Religious exhortation which places emphasis on the wickedness of yielding to impulse merely serves to encourage continence by building up inhibitions based on guilt feeling. These injudiciously expressed religious precepts tend to exaggerate the sufferer's sense of guilt and shame, and instead of inducing strong-minded self-control, this can only lead to desperate attempts to deny the very existence of the offending impulses. This in turn may provoke repressions and mental conflicts which may turn the individual into a worse social nuisance and misfit than he would have been had he simply stayed homosexual.

Homosexual impulses are abnormal only in relation to the standards of correct conduct set in our own culture. And to a society

which remains basically anti-sexual and repressive, and in which most people still believe that any sexual relationship outside marriage is wrong and even that sex itself is "dirty," homosexual behaviour is bound to appear shocking and unacceptable.

When a particular form of sexual expression is prohibited by law, reviled and misunderstood by most people, it affects not only the sex act itself, but all human relationships and personal consequences which flow from it. There is an urgent need for our society to come to a more realistic understanding of these aspects of sexuality and liberate the homosexual from the dubious, oppressive, almost dehumanizing position he or she is forced into in our society.

Centuries of belief in the shamefulness of sexual desire and intercourse are still deeply imbedded in most of our minds, and the fact that the majority of men and women indulge in sexual activity for pleasure rather than reproduction is regarded as that part of man which closely allies him to the lower animals. But those who think of human sexual intercourse as an act solely designed for the reproductive process are themselves degrading love to animal lust. The whole orientation of our moral concepts, and the laws that reflect it are out of step with reality and clearly oppressive to the individual, and it contains injustice, frustration and hypocrisy.

Unemployment and hunger erode the human mind and break the human spirit. Great advances are being made in dealing with the crudest form of poverty and deprivation, though we still have greater battles ahead of us. But the politics of morality are difficult. The perplexities of our legal codes and sanctions which frustrate the happiness of men and women, all the statutes which add misery and fear, these are the reality of the moral and political challenge of our time—because they are closest to the question of individual happiness and fulfilment. This in the long run can be the only save excuse for politics.

The sum total of human suffering and despair which countless men and women have to face alone in the darkest places of their private lives is a very heavy price to pay for our lethargic acceptance of outmoded laws, which is a result of our failures in education and guidance.

While the law should maintain its censure and punishment of those who offend against minors, those who seek relationships without a partner's consent, or those who offend against public

decency, there is no justification why citizens who are attracted to their own sex are labelled criminals, and sexual acts committed privately between consenting adults of the same sex are crimes. Clearly the law must be amended. And that would serve as a stepping stone for the homosexual towards ultimate self-emancipation.

Society in its turn has a two-fold task to perform, reaching both inward to the homosexual minority and outward to the heterosexual public. The urgent and primary task of society would be to raise the morale of so many homosexual people and help them build a more wholesomely integrated view of their homosexuality, in relation to all the rest of their life. On this level nothing less than full and complete acceptance will serve—not tolerance and not sympathy. By our attitudes and our actions we must make it possible for homosexuals to come out of hiding, to live their lives secure in their right to be themselves.

Social welfare agencies may be set up for this endeavour, and once a concerted effort of this nature has begun to bear fruit, a much more widespread campaign of public education will become possible.

The aim must be to make everyone aware that the "problem" of homosexuality—and the popular stereotypes of homosexuals—are only the product of ignorant assumptions. Assumptions fostered by a culture which has unhealthy, exaggerated feelings of shame and guilt at all forms of sexual expression whether so called "normal" or "abnormal."

When we have arrived at a concept of morality and ethics in interpersonal relationships according to which the dignity of the human condition is respected we would have ascended to a higher plane of morality in which only hatred is condemned, never love. Then we will have a saner and more healthy society and also a more enlightened sexual morality.



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