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conclusions and, since the design—while by no means airtight—rules out some of the obvious alternative expla-

nations, it seems to me not unwarranted to attribute the differences shown to the activities of the Association.

THE HOMOSEXUAL ROLE

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The current conceptualization of homosexuality as a condition is a false one, resulting from ethnocentric bias. Homosexuality should be seen rather as a social role. Anthropological evidence shows that the role does not exist in all societies, and where it does it is not always the same as in modern western societies. Historical evidence shows that the role did not emerge in England until towards the end of the seventeenth century. Evidence from the "Kinsey Reports" shows that, in spite of the existence of the role in our society, much homosexual behavior occurs outside the recognized role and the polarization between the heterosexual man and the homosexual man is far from complete.

Recent advances in the sociology of deviant behavior have not yet affected the study of homosexuality, which is still commonly seen as a condition characterizing certain persons in the way that birthplace or deformity might characterize them. The limitations of this view can best be understood if we examine some of its implications. In the first place, if homosexuality is a condition, then people either have it or do not have it. Many scientists and ordinary people assume that there are two kinds of people in the world: homosexuals and heterosexuals. Some of them recognize that homosexual feelings and behavior are not confined to the persons they would like to call "homosexuals" and that some of these persons do not actually engage in homosexual behavior. This should pose a crucial problem; but they evade the crux by retaining their assumption and puzzling over the question of how to tell whether someone is "really" homosexual or not. Lay people too will discuss whether a certain person is "queer" in much the same way as they

might question whether a certain pain indicated cancer. And in much the same way they will often turn to scientists or to medical men for a surer diagnosis. The scientists, for their part, feel it incumbent on them to seek criteria for diagnosis.

Thus one psychiatrist, discussing the definition of homosexuality, has written:

. . . I do not diagnose patients as homosexual unless they have engaged in overt homosexual behavior. Those who also engage in heterosexual activity are diagnosed as bisexual. An isolated experience may not warrant the diagnosis, but repetitive (sic) homosexual behavior in adulthood, whether sporadic or continuous, designates a homosexual.¹

Along with many other writers, he introduces the notion of a third type of person, the "bisexual," to handle the fact that behavior patterns cannot be conveniently dichotomized into hetero-

¹ Irving Bieber, "Clinical Aspects of Male Homosexuality," in Judd Marmor, editor, *Sexual Inversion*, New York: Basic Books, 1965, p. 248; this is but one example among many.

sexual and homosexual. But this does not solve the conceptual problem, since bisexuality too is seen as a condition (unless as a passing response to unusual situations such as confinement in a one-sex prison). In any case there is no extended discussion of bisexuality; the topic is usually given a brief mention in order to clear the ground for the consideration of "true homosexuality."

To cover the cases where the symptoms of behavior or of felt attractions do not match the diagnosis, other writers have referred to an adolescent homosexual phase or have used such terms as "latent homosexual" or "pseudo homosexual." Indeed one of the earliest studies of the subject, by Krafft-Ebing, was concerned with making a distinction between the "invert" who is congenitally homosexual and others who, although they behave in the same way, are not true inverts.²

A second result of the conceptualization of homosexuality as a condition is that the major research task has been seen as the study of its etiology. There has been much debate as to whether the condition is innate or acquired. The first step in such research has commonly been to find a sample of "homosexuals" in the same way that a medical researcher might find a sample of diabetics if he wanted to study that disease. Yet, after a long history of such studies, the results are sadly inconclusive and the answer is still as much a matter of opinion as it was when Havelock Ellis published *Sexual Inversion*³ seventy years ago. The failure of research to answer the question has not

been due to lack of scientific rigor or to any inadequacy of the available evidence; it results rather from the fact that the wrong question has been asked. One might as well try to trace the etiology of "committee-chairmanship" or "Seventh-Day Adventism" as of "homosexuality."

The vantage-point of comparative sociology enables us to see that the conception of homosexuality as a condition is, in itself, a possible object of study. This conception and the behavior it supports operate as a form of social control in a society in which homosexuality is condemned. Furthermore, the uncritical acceptance of the conception by social scientists can be traced to their concern with homosexuality as a social problem. They have tended to accept the popular definition of what the problem is and they have been implicated in the process of social control.

The practice of the social labeling of persons as deviant operates in two ways as a mechanism of social control.⁴ In the first place it helps to provide a clear-cut, publicized, and recognizable threshold between permissible and impermissible behavior. This means that people cannot so easily drift into deviant behavior. Their first moves in a deviant direction immediately raise the question of a total move into a deviant role with all the sanctions that this is likely to elicit. Secondly, the labeling serves to segregate the deviants from others and this means that their deviant practices and their self-justifications for these practices are contained within a relatively narrow group. The creation

² R. von Krafft-Ebing, *Psychopathia Sexualis*, 1889.

³ Later published in H. Ellis, *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*, Vol. 2, New York: Random House, 1936.

⁴ This is a grossly simplified account. Edwin Lemert provides a far more subtle and detailed analysis in *Social Pathology*, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1951, ch. 4, "Sociopathic Individuation."

of a specialized, despised, and punished role of homosexual keeps the bulk of society pure in rather the same way that the similar treatment of some kinds of criminals helps keep the rest of society law-abiding.

However, the disadvantage of this practice as a technique of social control is that there may be a tendency for people to become fixed in their deviance once they have become labeled. This, too, is a process that has become well-recognized in discussions of other forms of deviant behavior such as juvenile delinquency and drug taking and, indeed, of other kinds of social labeling such as streaming in schools and racial distinctions. One might expect social categorizations of this sort to be to some extent self-fulfilling prophecies: if the culture defines people as falling into distinct types—black and white, criminal and non-criminal, homosexual and normal—then these types will tend to become polarized, highly differentiated from each other. Later in this paper I shall discuss whether this is so in the case of homosexuals and “normals” in the United States today.

It is interesting to notice that homosexuals themselves welcome and support the notion that homosexuality is a condition. For just as the rigid categorization deters people from drifting into deviancy, so it appears to foreclose on the possibility of drifting back into normality and thus removes the element of anxious choice. It appears to justify the deviant behavior of the homosexual as being appropriate for him as a member of the homosexual category. The deviancy can thus be seen as legitimate for him and he can continue in it without rejecting the norms of the society.⁵

⁵ For discussion of situations in which

The way in which people become labeled as homosexual can now be seen as an important social process connected with mechanisms of social control. It is important, therefore, that sociologists should examine this process objectively and not lend themselves to participation in it, particularly since, as we have seen, psychologists and psychiatrists on the whole have not retained their objectivity but become involved as diagnostic agents in the process of social labeling.⁶

It is proposed that the homosexual should be seen as playing a social role rather than as having a condition. The role of “homosexual,” however, does not simply describe a sexual behavior pattern. If it did, the idea of a role would be no more useful than that of a condition. For the purpose of introducing the term “role” is to enable us to handle the fact that behavior in this sphere does not match popular beliefs: that sexual behavior patterns cannot be dichotomized in the way that the social roles of homosexual and heterosexual can.

It may seem rather odd to distinguish in this way between role and behavior, but if we accept a definition of role in terms of expectations (which may or may not be fulfilled), then the distinction is both legitimate and useful. In modern societies where a separate homosexual role is recognized, the expectation, on behalf of those who play the role and of others, is that a homosexual will be exclusively or very predominantly homosexual in his feelings and

deviants can lay claim to legitimacy, see Talcott Parsons, *The Social System*, New York: Free Press, 1951, pp. 292-293.

⁶ The position taken here is similar to that of Erving Goffman in his discussion of becoming a mental patient; *Asylums*, Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday-Anchor, 1961, pp. 128-146.

behavior. In addition, there are other expectations that frequently exist, especially on the part of nonhomosexuals, but affecting the self-conception of anyone who sees himself as homosexual. These are: the expectation that he will be effeminate in manner, personality, or preferred sexual activity; the expectation that sexuality will play a part of some kind in all his relations with other men; and the expectation that he will be attracted to boys and very young men and probably willing to seduce them. The existence of a social expectation, of course, commonly helps to produce its own fulfillment. But the question of how far it is fulfilled is a matter for empirical investigation rather than *a priori* pronouncement. Some of the empirical evidence about the chief expectation—that homosexuality precludes heterosexuality—in relation to the homosexual role in America is examined in the final section of this paper.⁷

In order to clarify the nature of the role and demonstrate that it exists only in certain societies, we shall present the cross-cultural and historical evidence available. This raises awkward problems of method because the material has hitherto usually been collected and analyzed in terms of culturally specific modern western conceptions.

THE HOMOSEXUAL ROLE IN VARIOUS SOCIETIES

To study homosexuality in the past or in other societies we usually have to rely on secondary evidence rather than on direct observation. The reliability and the validity of such evidence is open to

⁷ For evidence that many self-confessed homosexuals in England are not effeminate and many are not interested in boys, see Michael Schofield, *Sociological Aspects of Homosexuality*, London: Longmans, 1965.

question because what the original observers reported may have been distorted by their disapproval of homosexuality and by their definition of it, which may be different from the one we wish to adopt.

For example, Marc Daniel tries to refute accusations of homosexuality against Pope Julian II by producing four arguments: the Pope had many enemies who might wish to blacken his name; he and his supposed lover, Alidosi, both had mistresses; neither of them was at all effeminate; and the Pope had other men friends about whom no similar accusations were made.⁸ In other words 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. The fact that he does not fit is, of course, no evidence, as Daniel would have it, that his relationship with Alidosi was not a sexual one.

Anthropologists too can fall into this trap. Marvin Opler, summarizing anthropological evidence on the subject, says,

Actually, no society, save perhaps Ancient Greece, pre-Meiji Japan, certain top echelons in Nazi Germany, and the scattered examples of such special status groups as the berdaches, Nata slaves, and one category of Chuckchee shamans, has lent sanction in any real sense to homosexuality.⁹

Yet he goes on to discuss societies in which there are reports of sanctioned adolescent and other occasional "experimentation." Of the Cubeo of the

⁸ Marc Daniel, "Essai de méthodologie pour l'étude des aspects homosexuels de l'histoire," *Arcadie*, 133 (January, 1965), pp. 31-37.

⁹ Marvin Opler, "Anthropological and Cross-Cultural Aspects of Homosexuality," in Marmor, editor, *op. cit.*, p. 174.

North West Amazon, for instance, he says, "true homosexuality among the Cubeo is rare if not absent," giving as evidence the fact that no males with persistent homosexual patterns are reported.¹⁰

Allowing for such weaknesses, the Human Relations Area Files are the best single source of comparative information. Their evidence on homosexuality has been summarized by Ford and Beach,¹¹ who identify two broad types of accepted patterns: the institutionalized homosexual role and the liaison between men or boys who are otherwise heterosexual.

The recognition of a distinct role of *berdache* or transvestite is, they say, "the commonest form of institutionalized homosexuality." This form shows a marked similarity to that in our own society, though in some ways it is even more extreme. The Mohave Indians of California and Arizona, for example,¹² recognized both an *alybā*, a male transvestite who took the role of the woman in sexual intercourse, and a *hwamē*, a female homosexual who took the role of the male. People were believed to be born as *alybā* or *hwamē*, hints of their future proclivities occurring in their mothers' dreams during pregnancy. If a young boy began to behave like a girl and take an interest in women's things instead of men's, there was an initiation ceremony in which he would become an *alybā*. After that he would dress and act like a woman, would be

referred to as "she" and could take "husbands."

But the Mohave pattern differs from ours in that although the *alybā* was considered regrettable and amusing, he was not condemned and was given public recognition. The attitude was that "he was an *alybā*, he could not help it." But the "husband" of an *alybā* was an ordinary man who happened to have chosen an *alybā*, perhaps because they were good housekeepers or because they were believed to be "lucky in love," and he would be the butt of endless teasing and joking.

This radical distinction between the feminine passive homosexual and his masculine active partner is one which is not made very much in our own society,¹³ but which is very important in the Middle East. There, however, neither is thought of as being a "born" homosexual, although the passive partner, who demeans himself by his feminine submission, is despised and ridiculed, while the active one is not. In most of the ancient Middle East, including among the Jews until the return from the Babylonian exile, there were male temple prostitutes.¹⁴ Thus even cultures that recognize a separate homosexual role may not define it in the same way as our culture does.

Many other societies accept or approve of homosexual liaisons as part of a variegated sexual pattern. Usually

¹³ The lack of cultural distinction is reflected in behavior; Gordon Westwood found that only a small proportion of his sample of British homosexuals engaged in anal intercourse and many of these had been both active and passive and did not have a clear preference. See *A Minority*, London: Longmans, 1960, pp. 127-134.

¹⁴ Gordan Rattray Taylor, "Historical and Mythological Aspects of Homosexuality," in Marmor, *op. cit.*; Fernando Henriques, *Prostitution and Society*, Vol. 1, London: MacGibbon and Kee, 1962, pp. 341-343.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 117.

¹¹ C. S. Ford and F. A. Beach, *Patterns of Sexual Behavior*, New York: Harper, 1951, ch. 7.

¹² George Devereux, "Institutionalized Homosexuality of the Mohave Indians," *Human Biology*, Vol. 9, 1937, pp. 498-527; reprinted in Hendrik M. Ruitenbeek, editor, *The Problem of Homosexuality in Modern Society*, New York: Dutton, 1963.

these are confined to a particular stage in the individual's life. Among the Aranda of Central Australia, for instance, there are long-standing relationships of several years' duration, between unmarried men and young boys, starting at the age of ten to twelve.¹⁵ This is rather similar to the well-known situation in classical Greece, but there, of course, the older man could have a wife as well. Sometimes, however, as among the Siwans of North Africa,¹⁶ all men and boys can and are expected to engage in homosexual activities, apparently at every stage of life. In all of these societies there may be much homosexual behavior, but there are no "homosexuals."

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE HOMOSEXUAL ROLE IN ENGLAND

The problem of method is even more acute in dealing with historical material than with anthropological, for history is usually concerned with "great events" rather than with recurrent patterns. There are some records of attempts to curb sodomy among minor churchmen during the medieval period,¹⁷ which seem to indicate that it was common. At least they suggest that laymen feared on behalf of their sons that it was common. The term "cattamite" meaning "boy kept for immoral purposes," was first used in 1593, again suggesting that this practice was common then. But most of the historical references to homosexuality relate either to great men or to great scandals. However, over the last seventy years or so various scholars have tried to trace

the history of sex,¹⁸ and it is possible to glean a good deal from what they have found and also from what they have failed to establish.

Their studies of English history before the seventeenth century consist usually of inconclusive speculation as to whether certain men, such as Edward II, Christopher Marlowe, William Shakespeare, were or were not homosexual. Yet the disputes are inconclusive not because of lack of evidence but because none of these men fits the modern stereotype of the homosexual.

It is not until the end of the seventeenth century that other kinds of information become available and it is possible to move from speculations about individuals to descriptions of homosexual life. At this period references to homosexuals as a type and to a rudimentary homosexual subculture, mainly in London, begin to appear. But the earliest descriptions of homosexuals do not coincide exactly with the modern conception. There is much more stress on effeminacy and in particular in transvestism, to such an extent that there seems to be no distinction at first between transvestism and homosexuality.¹⁹ The terms emerging

¹⁸ Especially Havelock Ellis, *Sexual Inversion*, London: Wilson and Macmillan, 1897; Iwan Bloch (E. Dühren, pseud.), *Sexual Life in England Past and Present*, English translation, London: Francis Aldor, 1938; German edition, Charlottenberg, Berlin, 1901-03; Gordon Rattray Taylor, *Sex in History*, London: Thames and Hudson, 1953; Noel I. Garde, *Jonathan to Gide: The Homosexual in History*, New York: Vantage, 1964.

¹⁹ Dr. Evelyn Hooker has suggested that in a period when homosexual grouping and a homosexual subculture have not yet become institutionalized, homosexuals are likely to behave in a more distinctive and conspicuous manner because other means of making contact are not available. This is confirmed by the fact that lesbians are more

¹⁵ Ford and Beach, *op. cit.*, p. 132.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 131-132.

¹⁷ Geoffrey May, *Social Control of Sex Expression*, London: Allen and Unwin, 1930, pp. 65 and 101.

at this period to describe homosexuals—Molly, Nancy-boy, Madge-cull—emphasize effeminacy. In contrast the modern terms—like fag, queer, gay, bent—do not have this implication.²⁰

By the end of the seventeenth century, homosexual transvestites were a distinct enough group to be able to form their own clubs in London.²¹ Edward Ward's *History of the London Clubs*, published in 1709, describes one called "The Mollies' Club" which met "in a certain tavern in the City" for "parties and regular gatherings." The members "adopt(ed) all the small vanities natural to the feminine sex to such an extent that they try to speak, walk, chatter, shriek and scold as women do, aping them as well in other respects." The other respects apparently included the enactment of marriages and child-birth. The club was discovered and broken up by agents of the Reform Society.²² There were a number of similar scandals during the course of the eighteenth century as various homosexual coterie were exposed.

A writer in 1729 describes the widespread homosexual life of the 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

conspicuous than male homosexuals in our society, but does not seem to fit the 17th century, where the groups are already described as "clubs."

²⁰ However, "fairy" and "pansy," the commonest slang terms used by non-homosexuals, have the same meaning of effeminate as the earlier terms.

²¹ Bloch, *op. cit.*, p. 328, gives several examples, but attributes their emergence to the fact that "the number of homosexuals increased."

²² Quoted in *ibid.*, pp. 328-329.

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's Park, the Piazzas in Covent Garden, St. Clement's Churchyard, 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, and "Oh, you bold pullet, I'll break your eggs," and then frisk and walk away.²³

The notion of exclusive homosexuality became well-established during this period. When "two Englishmen, Leith and Drew, were accused of paederasty . . . The evidence given by the plaintiffs was, as was generally the case in these trials, very imperfect. On the other hand the defendants denied the accusation, and produced witnesses to prove their predilection for women. They were in consequence acquitted."²⁴ This could only have been an effective argument in a society that perceived homosexual behavior as incompatible with heterosexual tastes.

During the nineteenth century there are further reports of raided clubs and homosexual brothels. However, by this time the element of transvestism had diminished in importance. Even the male prostitutes are described as being of masculine build and there is more stress upon sexual license and less upon dressing up and play-acting.

The Homosexual Role and Homosexual Behavior

Thus, a distinct, separate, specialized role of "homosexual" emerged in England at the end of the seventeenth century and the conception of homosex-

²³ Anon, *Hell upon Earth: or the Town in an Uproar*, London, 1729, quoted by G. R. Taylor in Marmor, editor, *op. cit.*, p. 142.

²⁴ Bloch, *op. cit.*, p. 334.

uality as a condition which characterizes certain individuals and not others is now firmly established in our society. The term role is, of course, a form of shorthand. It refers not only to a cultural conception or set of ideas but also to a complex of institutional arrangements which depend upon and reinforce these ideas. These arrangements include all the forms of heterosexual activity, courtship, and marriage as well as the labeling processes—gossip, ridicule, psychiatric diagnosis, criminal conviction—and the groups and networks of the homosexual subculture. For simplicity we shall simply say that a specialized role exists.

How does the existence of this social role affect actual behavior? And, in particular, does the behavior of individuals conform to the cultural conception in the sense that most people are either exclusively heterosexual or exclusively homosexual? It is difficult to answer these questions on the basis of available evidence because so many researchers have worked with the preconception that homosexuality is a condition, so that in order to study the behavior they have first found a group of people who could be identified as "homosexuals." Homosexual behavior should be studied independently of social roles, if the connection between the two is to be revealed.

This may not sound like a particularly novel program to those who are familiar with Kinsey's contribution to the field.²⁵ He, after all, set out to study "sexual behavior;" he rejected the assumptions of scientists and laymen:

²⁵ Alfred C. Kinsey *et al.*, *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male*, Philadelphia and London: Saunders, 1948; and Kinsey *et al.*, *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female*, Philadelphia and London: Saunders, 1953.

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 . . . that every individual is innately—inherently—either heterosexual or homosexual . . . (and) that from the time of birth one is fated to be one thing or the other . . .²⁶

But, although some of Kinsey's ideas are often referred to, particularly in polemical writings, surprisingly little use has been made of his actual data.

Most of Kinsey's chapter on the "Homosexual Outlet"²⁷ centers on his "heterosexual-homosexual rating scale." His subjects were rated on this scale according to the proportion of their "psychologic reactions and overt experience" that was homosexual in any given period of their lives. It is interesting, and unfortunate for our purposes, that this is one of the few places in the book where Kinsey abandons his behavioristic approach to some extent. However, "psychologic reactions" may well be expected to be affected by the existence of a social role in the same way as overt behavior. Another problem with using Kinsey's material is that although he gives very full information about sexual behavior, the other characteristics of the people he interviewed are only given in a very bald form.²⁸ But Kinsey's study is un-

²⁶ Kinsey *et al.*, *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male*, pp. 636-37.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, ch. 21, pp. 610-666.

²⁸ The more general drawbacks of Kinsey's data, particularly the problem of the representativeness of his sample, have been thoroughly canvassed in a number of places; see especially William G. Cochran *et al.*, *Statistical Problems of the Kinsey Report on Sexual Behavior in the Human Male*, Washington: American Statistical Society, 1954.

doubtedly the fullest description there is of sexual behavior in any society and as such it is the safest basis for generalizations to other Western societies.

The ideal way to trace the effects on behavior of the existence of a homosexual role would be to compare societies in which the role exists with societies in which it does not. But as there are no adequate descriptions of homosexual behavior in societies where there is no homosexual role, we shall have to substitute comparisons within American society.

(1) *Polarization*

If the existence of a social role were reflected in people's behavior, we should expect to find that relatively few people would engage in bisexual behavior. The problem about investigating this empirically is to know what is meant by "relatively few." The categories of Kinsey's rating scale are, of course, completely arbitrary. He has five bisexual categories, but he might just as well have had more or less, in which case the number falling into

each would have been smaller or larger. The fact that the distribution of his scale is U-shaped, then, is in itself meaningless. (See Table 1).

It is impossible to get direct evidence of a polarization between the homosexual and the heterosexual pattern, though we may note the suggestive evidence to the contrary that at every age far more men have bisexual than exclusively homosexual patterns. However, by making comparisons between one age group and another and between men and women, it should be possible to see some of the effects of the role.

(2) *Age Comparison*

As they grow older, more and more men take up exclusively heterosexual patterns, as Table 1, Column 2 shows. The table also shows that *each* of the bisexual and homosexual categories, columns 3-8, contains fewer men as time goes by after the age of 20. The greatest losses are from the fifth bisexual category, column 7, with responses that are "almost entirely homosexual." It is a fairly small group to

TABLE 1
HETEROSEXUAL-HOMOSEXUAL RATING: ACTIVE INCIDENCE BY AGE*

Age	Percent of each age group of male population having each rating								
	(1) X	(2) 0	(3) 1	(4) 2	(5) 3	(6) 4	(7) 5	(8) 6	(9) 1-6
15	23.6	48.4	3.6	6.0	4.7	3.7	2.6	7.4	28.0
20	3.3	69.3	4.4	7.4	4.4	2.9	3.4	4.9	27.4
25	1.0	79.2	3.9	5.1	3.2	2.4	2.3	2.9	19.8
30	0.5	83.1	4.0	3.4	2.1	3.0	1.3	2.6	16.4
35	0.4	86.7	2.4	3.4	1.9	1.7	0.9	2.6	12.9
40	1.3	86.8	3.0	3.6	2.0	0.7	0.3	2.3	11.9
45	2.7	88.8	2.3	2.0	1.3	0.9	0.2	1.8	8.5

* Based on Kinsey (1948) p. 652, Table 148.

X = unresponsive to either sex; 0 = entirely heterosexual; 1 = largely heterosexual, but with incidental homosexual history; 2 = largely heterosexual but with a distinct homosexual history; 3 = equally heterosexual and homosexual; 4 = largely homosexual but with distinct heterosexual history; 5 = largely homosexual but with incidental heterosexual history; 6 = entirely homosexual.

begin with, but by the age of 45 it has almost entirely disappeared. On the other hand the first bisexual category, column 3, with only "incidental homosexual histories" has its numbers not even halved by the age of 45. Yet at all ages the first bisexual category represents a much smaller proportion of those who are almost entirely homosexual (columns 2 and 3) than the fifth category represents of those who are almost entirely homosexual (columns 7 and 8). In everyday language, it seems that proportionately more "homosexuals" dabble in heterosexual activity than "heterosexuals" dabble in homosexual activity and such dabbling is particularly common in the younger age groups of 20 to 30. This indicates that the existence of the despised role operates at all ages to inhibit people from engaging in occasional homosexual behavior, but does not have the effect of making the behavior of many "homosexuals" exclusively homosexual.

On the other hand, the overall reduction in the amount of homosexual behavior with age can be attributed in part to the fact that more and more men become married. While the active incidence of homosexual behavior is high and increases with age among single men, among married men it is low and decreases only slightly with age. Unfortunately the Kinsey figures do not enable us to compare the incidence of homosexuality among single men who later marry and those who do not.

(3) *Comparison of Men and Women*

The notion of a separate homosexual role is much less well-developed for women than it is for men and so too are the attendant techniques of social control and the deviant subculture and organization. So a comparison with

women's sexual behavior should tell us something about the effects of the social role on men's behavior.

Fewer women than men engage in homosexual behavior. By the time they are 45, 26 percent of women have had *some* homosexual experience, whereas about 50 percent of men have. But this is probably a cause rather than an effect of the difference in the extent to which the homosexual role is crystallized, for women engage in less non-marital sexual activity of any kind than men. For instance, by the time they marry 50 percent of women have had some pre-marital heterosexual experience to orgasm, whereas as many as 90 percent of men have.

The most revealing contrast is between the male and female distributions on the Kinsey rating scale, shown in Table 2. The distributions for women follow a smooth J-shaped pattern, while those for men are uneven with an increase in numbers at the exclusively homosexual end. The distributions for women are the shape that one would expect on the assumption that homosexual and heterosexual acts are randomly distributed in a ratio of 1 to 18.²⁹ The men are relatively more concentrated in the exclusively homosexual category. This appears to confirm the hypothesis that the existence of the role is reflected in behavior.

Finally, it is interesting to notice that although at the age of 20 far more men than women have homosexual and bisexual patterns (27 percent as against 11 percent), by the age of 35 the figures are both the same (13 percent). Women seem to broaden their sexual experience as they get older

²⁹ This cannot be taken in a rigorously statistical sense, since the categories are arbitrary and do not refer to numbers, or even proportions, of actual sexual acts.

TABLE 2
COMPARISON OF MALE AND FEMALE HETEROSEXUAL-HOMOSEXUAL
RATINGS: ACTIVE INCIDENCE AT SELECTED AGES*

		Percent of each age group having each rating								
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
Age	X	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	6	1-6
Male	20	3.3	69.3	4.4	7.4	4.4	2.9	3.4	4.9	27.4
Female		15	74	5	2	1	1	1	1	11
Male	35	0.4	86.7	2.4	3.4	1.9	1.7	0.9	2.6	12.9
Female		7	80	7	2	1	1	1	1	13

* Based on Kinsey (1948) p. 652, Table 148 and Kinsey (1953) p. 499, Table 142. For explanation of the ratings, see Table 1.

whereas more men become narrower and more specialized.

None of this, however, should obscure the fact that, in terms of behavior, the polarization between the heterosexual man and the homosexual man is far from complete in our society. Some polarization does seem to have occurred, but many men manage to follow patterns of sexual behavior that are between the two, in spite of our cultural preconceptions and institutional arrangements.

CONCLUSION

This paper has dealt with only one small aspect of the sociology of homosexuality. It is, nevertheless, a fundamental one. For it is not until he sees homosexuals as a social category, rather than a medical or psychiatric one, that the sociologist can begin to ask the right questions about the specific content of the homosexual role and about

the organization and functions of homosexual groups.³⁰ All that has been done here is to indicate that the role does not exist in many societies, that it only emerged in England towards the end of the seventeenth century, and that, although the existence of the role in modern America appears to have some effect on the distribution of homosexual behavior, such behavior is far from being monopolized by persons who play the role of homosexual.

³⁰ But an interesting beginning has been made by Evelyn Hooker in "The Homosexual Community," *Proc. XIVth Int. Congr. Appl. Psychol. Personality Research*, Vol. 2, Copenhagen, Munksgaard, 1962; and "Male Homosexuals and their Worlds," Marmor, editor, *op. cit.*, pp. 83-107; there is much valuable descriptive material in Donald Webster Cory, *The Homosexual in America*, New York: Greenberg, 1951; and in Gordon Westwood, *A Minority: A Report on the Life of the Male Homosexual in Great Britain*, London: Longmans, 1960, as well as elsewhere.