

for killing Patroclus, is homophile, as is the language in which the hero addresses the dead Patroclus and Patroclus' spirit requests that their ashes be united in the same urn forever.

So if Homer (or the bards whose work is preserved under his name) did not anticipate the pederasty of the Golden Age, he created an imperishable monument of male love and fidelity on the battlefield that is one of the earliest, yet enduring classics of world literature.

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## HOMOPHILE

A modern coinage from the Greek, etymologically the term means "loving the same." *Homophile* is, theoretically at least, broader in scope than *homosexual*, in that it includes nongenital as well as genital relations, but less broad than *homosocial*, which comprises all significant relations between members of the same sex. Although the term had some circulation in Germany in the 1920s (e.g., as *Homophilie* in the writings of the astrophically inclined Karl-Günther Heimsoth), it was first used systematically in the Dutch homosexual rights movement after World War II. It was internationally diffused through the advocacy of the International Committee for Sexual Equality (Amsterdam) in the early 1950s. In the following decade the word homophile was adopted as a self-designation by a number of middle-class organizations in the United States, and it seemed for a time that it might prevail. Homophile had the advantage of clearly including affectional, nonsexual

relations as well as sexual ones, thereby deemphasizing the perceived genital emphasis of the term homosexual.

The new militant trend that arose in the wake of the 1969 Stonewall Rebellion rejected the word homophile as a euphemism, preferring *gay*. Histories of the gay movement sometimes refer to the years 1950-69, when the word was in vogue, as the "homophile period." This phase stands in contrast with the more radical one that ensued.

## HOMOPHILE MOVEMENT

See *Movement, Homosexual*.

## HOMOPHOBIA

Although precise definitions vary, this term usually refers to negative attitudes toward homosexual persons and homosexuality. Characterizing antihomosexual prejudice as a *phobia* has been criticized for several reasons, including the implication that such prejudice is an irrational fear and a manifestation of individual pathology rather than of cultural norms. Despite its limitations, "homophobia" is likely to enjoy increasingly widespread use in American English until a more suitable term is introduced. Care should be taken, therefore, to identify homophobia as a prejudice, comparable to racism and anti-Semitism, rather than an irrational fear similar to claustrophobia or agoraphobia.

*Institutional Homophobia.* At the institutional and individual levels, homophobia can be observed both through explicit hostility toward lesbians and gay men and through failure to recognize the existence of gay people or the legitimacy of their concerns. Institutional homophobia manifests itself in part through anti-gay laws, policies, and pronouncements from legislatures, courts, organized religion, and other groups within society. It also is evident in the social processes that reinforce the general invisibility of lesbians and gay men in society (e.g., in mass media, through

definitions of "family" entirely in heterosexual terms).

The complex evolution of institutional homophobia is revealed through historical and anthropological studies, which indicate that the development of Western definitions of sexuality and sexual orientation has for centuries been characterized by disapproval of homosexuality. Among the factors cited to explain this disapproval has been society's presumed need to define and maintain strict gender roles and to link sexual behavior with procreation. Both of these ideological factors often are presumed to be necessary for promoting heterosexual family units as sites for reproduction and the socialization of children into the economic and social system. Other explanations for institutional homophobia highlight intergroup conflicts in which hostility toward homosexuality has been utilized to one group's advantage (e.g., in power struggles by religious groups or in electoral politics).

*Individual Homophobia.* This is exemplified by many heterosexuals' open hostility toward gay people (ranging from deprecatory statements to physical attacks) and their maintenance of a completely heterosexual worldview (including, for example, the ongoing assumption that all of their friends and relatives are heterosexual).

National surveys and laboratory studies consistently have documented correlations between individual homophobic attitudes and various demographic and psychological variables. In contrast to heterosexual persons with favorable or tolerant attitudes, those with more homophobic attitudes also are more likely to subscribe to a conservative or fundamentalist religious ideology and to attend religious services frequently, to hold restrictive attitudes concerning sexuality and gender roles, and to manifest high levels of authoritarianism. Additionally, homophobic individuals are less likely than others to report having engaged in homosexual behaviors or to have had personal contact

with openly gay men or women. Homophobic persons tend to be older and less well-educated than nonhomophobic persons, and are more likely to live in areas where negative attitudes toward homosexuality are the norm (e.g., the midwestern and southern United States, and rural areas or small towns).

In many empirical studies, more anti-gay hostility has been observed among heterosexual males than among heterosexual females; the highest levels of homophobia often have been displayed by heterosexual males toward gay men. This sex difference has been found in laboratory studies more often than in national surveys, possibly because the former kind of study tends to assess deeply-felt emotion-laden reactions to homosexual persons while the latter tends to assess value-oriented responses to homosexuality (i.e., whether or not it is morally acceptable and whether civil rights protection should be extended to gay people).

Empirical research on homophobic behavior (e.g., acts of discrimination, assaults on lesbians and gay men) is sparse, although interest in the perpetration of "hate crimes" based on homosexuality is increasing among political groups and policy makers. Several nonrandom surveys conducted in the United States suggest that homosexual persons are much more likely than heterosexuals to be targets of verbal harassment, vandalism, physical assault, sexual assault, and murder. The incidence of such hate crimes may be increasing, fueled by societal reactions to the epidemic of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome; as an epidemic closely associated in the United States with gay men, AIDS has been used by some heterosexuals as a justification for expressing preexisting homophobic attitudes.

Various explanations have been offered for the existence of individual homophobia. All of them implicitly acknowledge that individual attitudes are formed within a larger societal context

that encourages prejudice against homosexual people. The goal of such explanations, then, is to explain why some heterosexuals manifest higher (or lower) levels of homophobia than is expected by society.

A psychodynamic explanation proposes that extremely homophobic individuals themselves have unconscious homosexual desires which, because of societal attitudes, cause them great anxiety; their homophobia serves as a psychological defense by disguising those desires. An alternative explanation is that individual homophobia reflects ignorance about homosexuality, owing to lack of personal contact with gay women and men. A third approach suggests that homophobia serves different social and psychological functions for different persons. For some it is a strategy for psychological defense; for others it is a way of making sense of past interactions with gay people; for others, expressing homophobic sentiments provides a means for gaining social approval or for affirming a particular self-concept through expressing values important to that self.

*Internalized Homophobia (Self-Contempt).* Lesbian women and gay men themselves are not immune from homophobia, since they are socialized into a culture where hostility toward homosexuality is the norm. Homophobia among gay people is termed "internalized homophobia" and is understood to involve a rejection of one's own homosexual orientation. This phenomenon is analogous to the self-contempt felt by members of stigmatized ethnic groups. Recognizing and rejecting the homophobic aspects of socialization are important parts of the coming out process.

*Reducing Homophobia.* Eliminating homophobia at the institutional and individual levels inevitably must be a dialectical process since individuals live within the social context created by institutions, while those institutions are shaped and populated by individuals. Among major successes in challenging institutional

homophobia have been the elimination of homosexuality as a diagnostic category from the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM-III-R) of the American Psychiatric Association, recognition and acceptance of gay people by some liberal religious denominations, repeal or overturning of several state sodomy laws, and the passage of anti-discrimination legislation in one state (Wisconsin) and more than 40 municipalities.

Little empirical research has been conducted on the effectiveness of various strategies for reducing individual homophobia. To the extent that different heterosexuals have different motivations for their homophobia, multiple approaches are necessary. When expressions of homophobia function to reinforce an individual's self-concept as a good Christian, for example, appeals to other important values (e.g., compassion and love of one's neighbor, patriotism and support for civil rights) are more likely to change attitudes than are factual refutations of incorrect stereotypes about homosexual persons.

While no single strategy is universally effective in countering prejudice, personal contact with gay people appears to be the most consistently influential factor in reducing heterosexuals' homophobia. In national opinion polls, persons who say they know an openly gay man or lesbian consistently report more positive attitudes toward gay people as a group. This pattern is consistent with the social science finding that ongoing personal contact between members of majority and minority groups frequently reduces prejudice among majority-group members. Thus, disclosing one's homosexual orientation to family members, friends, and coworkers often is a potent means for challenging homophobia. This hypothesis highlights the importance of institutional changes (e.g., elimination of sodomy laws, passage of anti-discrimination legislation, protection from hate crimes) that will enable lesbian women and gay men to come out with fewer risks.

See also **Authoritarian Personality; Discrimination; Myths and Fabrications; Stereotype.**

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### HOMOSEXUAL (TERM)

For at least half a century *homosexual* has been the most generally accepted designation for same-sex orientation. The cognate forms enjoy a similar status in all the major Western European languages, and in others as well (e.g., Russian and Turkish). Etymologically, the word homosexual is a hybrid: the first part, homo-, being the Greek combining form meaning "same"; the second (late) Latin. (The mistaken belief that the homo-component represents the Latin word for "man" has probably contributed to resistance to the expression among lesbians.)

The term homosexual began its public life in two anonymous German pamphlets published by Károly Mária Kertbeny in 1869. (He used the term in private correspondence a year before.) *Homosexual* probably owed its inspiration in part to the term bisexual that had been introduced into botany in the first decade of the nineteenth century with the meaning "having the sexual organs of both sexes" (of plants). Writing in opposition to a proposed extension of a Prussian antisodomy law to the whole of the North German Confederation, the writer was by no means a disinterested observer. A polyglot and translator (not a physician as usually

claimed), Kertbeny contrasted *homosexual* and *normalsexual*. His coinage might have gone unnoticed had not Gustav Jaeger, a lifestyle reformer and professor of zoology and anthropology at the University of Stuttgart, popularized it in the second edition of his *Entdeckung der Seele* (1880). Thus the term homosexual was not born under the aegis of pure science as one might suppose, but was the creation of a closeted advocate of homosexual rights. It is a curious irony today that some gay liberationists of the second half of the twentieth century oppose the word homosexual as a label imposed on them by the enemy.

In the period of its introduction, Kertbeny's term had to compete with other German creations, notably Karl Heinrich Ulrichs' *Urnigum* and *Uranismus* (uranianism) and K. F. O. Westphal's *die conträre Sexualempfindung* (contrary sexual feeling). Given its obscure origins, why did the term homosexual ultimately prevail? Uranian and its congeners enjoyed currency for a time, but were too arcane for the ordinary speaker, while the antonym Dionian (= heterosexual) never achieved the slightest acceptance. Westphal's cumbersome expression was doubly isolated: it was usable only in German and lacked the matching terms of the series. By contrast, the set *homosexual/bisexual/heterosexual* that finally emerged seemed to encompass (and trisect) the semantic field. Moreover, the abstract nouns *Homosexualität/Homosexualismus* which Kertbeny also devised served to denote the condition. All these forms, being grafted onto the trunk of the Latin adjective *sexualis*, had no difficulty in gaining international currency. And so in the first decade of the twentieth century—in the course of reporting the Harden-Eulenburg-von Moltke-Städele affair in Wilhelmine Germany—journalism adopted the Greek-Latin hybrid *homosexual* and made it part of the everyday vocabulary, while the expression *sexual inversion* remained limited to psychiatric circles.