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IMMATURITY THEORY

When confronted with a teenager's homosexuality or lesbianism, parents will often exclaim, "It's just a phase. S/he will grow out of it." While this view reflects popular ideas of personality growth, it also finds a learned prop in the psychoanalytic idea that human bisexuality is a halfway house along a path that is always directed toward a final goal of heterosexual maturity. In keeping with this premise the persistence of a homosexual pattern in adult life is ascribed to "arrested development."

The immaturity notion also accords with the folkloric view that a "little experimentation" is permissible, as long as it does not "become a habit." This motif borders on the concept of deviant sex as self-indulgence, a flight from the serious responsibilities imposed by raising a family. In clinical sessions psychiatrists have had recourse to the reproach of immaturity as a lever to induce young clients to give up their homosexuality.

Of course there are individuals who try a few homosexual acts in youth and, having then found that this is not where their major interest lies, come to live essentially heterosexual lives. Other young people, aware of the stigma that still attaches to homosexuality, cling to the immaturity notion as a device of denial, refusing to accept as long as they can their homosexual orientation. In the recent past, some of these persons would contract a heterosexual marriage in hopes of putting the "immaturity" behind them. Such expedients have rarely been successful. This denial can result in unhappiness both for those who embrace it and for

others who are emotionally and socially involved with them.

Conceptually, the immaturity theory makes an incongruous contrast with its opposite, *satiation*.

IMMIGRATION

Today's world has become concerned with immigration, not only because millions have migrated but also because the rise of the modern state and its definition of nationality has made the matter fraught with complications. Homosexuals live in a certain degree of tension with the environing society and have fewer ties to keep them rooted in the communities where they grew up. For this reason, they tend to migrate, not just to large cities with their convenient anonymity, but even across national borders. In the past, conflict with the law often sent homosexual men in precipitous flight to escape long prison terms or even a lynch mob, while voluntary exile amounted to a commutation of a severe penalty: in either case the individual whose homosexual activity was exposed ceased to be a member of society. If he was fortunate, he might settle in another part of world where his past was unknown and could not easily be discovered; and here, too, he could resume the series of casual liaisons that had become part of his lifestyle.

A visit of few days as part of a vacation trip is technically an act of immigration, even if the foreigner has no intention of residing permanently or becoming a citizen of the host country; and many are the homosexuals who either prefer exotic sexual partners or, possessing discretionary income but without families to accompany them, enjoy travel abroad, even to distant lands, in search of erotic adventures or pleasures denied them in the communities where they reside.

The Evolution of American Law. Homosexuality as an issue for the authorities that control immigration, in the United States the Immigration and Naturaliza-