INCIDENCE OF OVERT HOMOSEXUALITY IN THE UNITED STATES AND WESTERN EUROPE

Paul H. Gebhard

Introduction

While there is an enormous and growing amount of literature on the subject of homosexuality, there have been few surveys which permit one to make inferences as to the incidence of homosexuality in the general population or in any substantial segment of it. There have been roughly a score of investigations which are useful in establishing the parameters of incidence, and all of these have taken place in this century—chiefly since World War II. The subjects of these studies have usually been upper-middle class or upper class individuals, and many were college students at the time. This emphasis upon the better educated is the result of their greater cooperativeness and availability, and the inability of the investigators to cope with a milieu other than their own.

In seeking data as to the incidence of homosexuality in the general population one must beware of percentages given without citations or substantiating factual evidence. Some are pure guesstimates while others appear to be reiterations of previously published figures. I have excluded from this paper all such incidence figures.

In a few other cases incidence figures are derived from studies which are in themselves legitimate and useful, but which have no relevance to the general population. An example of such a study is Strakosch's research on the sexual lives of psychopathic women (24). These also are excluded from the present paper.

Western Europe

Around the turn of the century there were a number of European physicians and scientists who were interested in human sex research and who were, at considerable personal risk, inaugurating studies. While some made what one may term informed guesses as to the incidence of homosexuality (Havelock Ellis' 2 - 5 percent is an example), three empirical surveys were launched between 1903 and 1905.

Römer (18) sent a questionnaire including questions on homosexuality to 600 male university students in Holland. Of the 308 who replied, 1.9 percent reported they were completely or nearly completely homosexual and 3.9 percent labeled themselves as "bisexual." This gives a grand total of 5.8 percent who we may assume had overt homosexual experience currently or in the recent past.

Chelenkov (2) sent a similar questionnaire to male students at the University of Moscow. Although it is not clear, there is reason to believe he aimed at the entire student body. In any case, he received replies from 2,150 individuals, or roughly half the student body. Unfortunately the portion devoted to homosexuality was included in a small section reserved for sexual anomalies, and this fact plus the wording probably biased the replies. Only about half of the respondents answered this sexual anomaly section and insofar as I can reconstruct it, only six to 10 males reported homosexual experience: less than 1 percent.

Hirschfeld (12) conducted by far the most ambitious survey, sending questionnaires to 3,000 male students at the Charlottenberg Institute of Technology and to 5,721 metal workers in Berlin. Some 49 percent (3,665 individuals) replied. On the basis of these replies plus some additional calculations Hirschfeld decided that 2.3 percent were exclusively homosexual and 3.4 percent "bisexual," giving a total of 5.7 percent.

World War I and the subsequent economic dislocations essentially halted sex research surveys in Europe and the let totalitarian governments did not provide a climate conducive to such studies. As Europe began to emerge from the Depression, any hopes of revival of sex research were dashed by World War II. Consequently there was a gap of nearly half a century before human sex research was revived on any scale.

Friedeberg (6) was stimulated by reading the Kinsey book to launch a survey in Western Germany in 1949. Some 1,344 persons were solicited for interviews and 75 percent (1,010) consented. Of the 1,010, 493 were male and 517 female. The interviews were done by physicians, psychologists, teachers, and public welfare officials belonging to the Institute for Demoskopie. About two-thirds of the males and half the females were married, and the minimum age was 20. The questions were rather badly formulated. The respondent was asked the age of his "first sexual experience" and then asked with whom he had it. Six percent of the males reported a male and 5 percent of the females reported with a female. The following question was asked only of males:
“Did you have homosexual experiences later?” Nearly one-quarter (23 percent) answered affirmatively. Some unknown, but minority, portion of the experience may have been prepubertal, but the initial question, “Did you mature earlier than your contemporaries?” should have induced the respondents to report only postpubertal behavior.

Spencer (23) made a study of Oxford students which he published in 1959. He had two groups: 100 undergraduate psychiatric patients and a control group of 100 nonpatient freshmen. The control reported that 35 percent of them had had overt homosexual experience at some point in life, including childhood. However only 13 percent had had recent (postpubertal) activity. None stated that they were currently engaging in homosexual behavior. Eight males stated that their homosexuality persisted from childhood into postpubertal life. The psychiatric patients had a markedly higher incidence as well as current activity.

Schofield (20) surveyed some 1,873 unmarried young people in England in the early 1960's. Four hundred seventy-eight were boys aged 15 to 17 and 456 were young men aged 17 to 19; 475 were girls aged 15 to 17 and 464 were young women aged 17 to 19. He made no special effort to ascertain the incidence of homosexuality, but 5 percent of the males and 2 percent of the females reported homosexual experience at some point in life.

Giese (8) of the University of Hamburg mounted the largest survey and one patterned after the Kinsey schedule of questions. Aided by his assistant Gunter Schmidt and other graduate students, he sent questionnaires to male and female students in North German colleges in 1965. The results have thus far not been published, but are appearing as doctoral dissertations. My data come chiefly from the dissertation of Wilhelm Schoof (21). Roughly half of the questionnaires were returned, giving an N of 3,666 individuals of whom 831 were females. Since puberty (given arbitrarily as age 12) 19 percent of the males and 4 percent of the females had had an overt homosexual experience. Most of this was confined to adolescence since 15 percent of the males and 3 percent of the females stated their homosexual experience was between ages 12 to 18. Within the prior 12 months, only 3 percent of the males and 1 percent of the females had had homosexual contact.

A substantial amount of prepubertal homosexuality was reported: 23 percent for boys and 21 percent for girls.

Of those with homosexual contact at any time in their lives, 66 percent confined such activity to their prepubertal years, 18 percent started homosexuality before puberty and continued it into postpubertal life, and 16 percent did not begin until after puberty.

Hertof (11) in 1965 approached 422 Danish army inductees aged 18 to 19 for interviews and succeeded in interviewing 400. Seventeen males (4 percent) reported “they could feel sexual attraction to a person of their own sex.” Seventeen males, presumably the same 17 mentioned, reported overt homosexual experience since puberty. All of the males had had heterosexual petting and most had had coitus; none considered themselves to be homosexual.

United States

Thanks to its economic status and being spared the ravages of war, the United States sustained—or at least tolerated—a series of survey research programs beginning in the late 1920's and continuing intermittently to the present. As usual, these focused on the white college-educated segment of the population.

Davis (3) published in 1929 her report on 1,000 married and 1,200 unmarried females, a report which is extremely confusing in its statistical presentation. The females were predominantly upper and upper-middle class individuals, college-educated, and from the north-eastern quadrant of the country. The data were collected by questionnaire. Close to one-third (30.6 percent) of the married females and half (50.4 percent) of the unmarried reported they had had an “intense emotional relationship with other women.” This need not have been, but sometimes was, consciously sexual. Some 14 percent of the married and 19 percent of the unmarried reported overt homosexual contact including genital stimulation. The age distributions were such that these may be regarded as lifetime incidence figures subject to only small upward revision.

Hamilton (10) published, in the same year as Davis, on a sample of 100 males and 100 females, all of whom were married and who belonged to the upper and upper-middle classes. Nine of 10 of the males and nearly three-quarters of the females had attended college. Seventeen percent of the men had had overt homosexual experience since age 18, and about 14 percent reported current homosexual psychological responses. Twenty-six percent of the women had had overt homosexual contact since age 18, and about 13 percent reported current psychological responses.

Dickinson (4) reported in 1934 on 350 unmarried gynecological patients from the area of New York City. Of these, 28 (or 8 percent) stated in their interviews that they had had overt homosexual experience.

Terman (25) in 1938 published on a questionnaire sample of 1,242 males and an equal number of females.
All were married and middle to upper-middle class individuals residing chiefly in California. A substantial number had attended college. Slightly over 5 percent of the men and 8 percent of the women reported sexual attraction to the same sex. No question was asked concerning overt behavior.

Bromley (1), a journalist, and Britten conducted a survey of college students which they described in their book published in 1938. Five hundred questionnaires were sent to undergraduates and 1,088 returns were received from 46 colleges, 618 being from females and 470 from males. Only 375 of the females answered the question concerning homosexuality and of these 13 (or 4 percent) reported having had such experience. All but one claimed to have “outgrown” homosexual activity. About three-quarters of the male students answered the questions concerned with homosexuality and 46 (or 13 percent of those answering) reported overt behavior. One-third of these males had confined such experience to early adolescence, but the remaining two-thirds had it in later life.

Landis (16) in 1940 published a study comparing the sexual lives of female psychiatric patients with a control group of 153 presumably normal women from the New York City area. Of the 109 married control women, 4 had had homosexual contact and, of the 44 unmarried, only one was similarly experienced.

Ramsey (17) reported in 1943 on the results of an interview conducted with 291 high school students. The youngest was 10, the oldest 20; 88 percent were aged 12 to 16. All but 5 were white. Roughly two-fifths had had prepubertal homosexual contact. After puberty the accumulative incidence of overt homosexual experience rose from 14 percent to 28 percent by age 15 and finally stabilized at about 30 percent by ages 16 and 17.

Hohman and Schaffner (13), psychiatrists reporting in 1947 on extremely brief (several minutes) interviews with 4,600 army inductees during the course of induction, not unexpectedly found a small fraction of 1 percent of the young men admitting to homosexual experience.

Finger (5) in the same year published on his questionnaire study of 111 white male college students from three successive classes in psychology. Their mean age was 19.4. Some 27 percent reported overt homosexual experience resulting in orgasm. Some unknown portion of this was prepubertal, but the median age at first experience was 12.2 years. The median age at most recent experience was 14 (the mean was 15). Only 8 males (7 percent) had had overt experience after age 16.

Kinsey (14) in 1948 published a detailed report of the data obtained through interviewing roughly 5,000 white males. Unfortunately the incidence figures for the grade school educated and high school educated are distorted by the inclusion of substantial numbers of individuals with prison experience. Such persons, we now know, have considerably more of their number with homosexual experience than those of the same socioeconomic class who have never been incarcerated. This “prison bias” is particularly marked among the high school educated segment of the sample. The college educated sample, which had almost no individuals who had been imprisoned, is unbiased in this regard. At some future date the data will be recomputed with the prison inmates excluded. Until then one should use only the college educated sample.

In terms of accumulative incidence, the Kinsey data indicates that homosexuality is for all practical purposes a phenomenon of the unmarried. While married males do engage in this behavior, they almost without exception had prior experience before marriage. The postpubertal incidence of homosexual contact among the college-educated male sample is 6 percent by age 12 and rapidly rises to 21 percent by age 15 during the period when experimentation is the rule and the management of sexuality not yet well developed. Thereafter the rate of increase is slow, the incidence reaching 27 percent by age 20 and 33 percent by age 25. As the heterosexuality inclined marry and thus leave the unmarried sample, this selective factor leaves a progressively more homosexual residuum so that the incidence continues to inexorably but slowly rise. By age 30 it is 40 percent and by age 37 it is 55 percent. We have the impression that in later life the figure does not go much beyond this, but confirmative data must await new card sortings including the males interviewed since this 1948 volume.

The age-specific incidence of homosexual contact by married males is inconsequential among the college-educated, varying (from age 16 to 45) from 2 to 3 percent. Among the never married the incidence is greatest during early adolescence (puberty to age 15) when 21 percent were involved, drops to 16 percent between ages 16 and 20, falls to 9.5 percent during the years when serious courtship is maximal (age 21-25), and rises to 17 percent between ages 26 and 30 as the aforementioned selective factor begins to operate.

Among the college educated a rural-urban breakdown revealed no significant difference, but religious devoutness was a powerful factor, the devout having considerably fewer members with homosexual experience. Curiously enough, age at puberty correlated rather strongly: the earlier the puberty the higher the incidence of homosexual experience. This is certainly in part a matter of increased exposure to the possibility of
homosexual contact during early adolescence when one is particularly liable to such experience. Kinsey was inclined toward some physiological explanation, but this seems less likely now in view of several alternative explanations. One of these, and one for which there is some evidence, is that older males tend to place their age at puberty later and to be more prone to forget early and incidental experience. We shall test this matter more thoroughly.

Gilbert Youth Survey (9) of 1951 reported on some undisclosed number of male and female college students from 14 colleges and universities scattered across the nation. The sample was almost evenly divided between males and females. Most were aged 17 to 22, only 3.4 percent were married, and presumably the great majority were white. In this questionnaire study 12.3 percent of the males and 6.4 percent of the females reported having had at least one “homosexual relationship.” Roughly twice as many reported ever having had “homosexual inclinations” (males 22.3 percent, females 13.4 percent). Of those who had had “homosexual relations,” nearly two-fifths of the males and half the females had their first experience at age 14 or younger; about an equal number of males but only 30 percent of the females had their initial experience between ages 15 and 17; and about one-fifth of both the males and females with experience had it for the first time at age 18 or older. In brief, the bulk of the homosexuality was in adolescence, particularly in early adolescence.

Kinsey (15) and his colleagues (including the author of this paper) reported upon their white female sample in 1953. By this date it was recognized that persons with prison experience should be excluded from “normal” populations—a recognition which forced us to abandon our sample of grade-school educated wherein there were many prison inmates.

Again, as with the male, homosexual incidence was found to be a phenomenon of the never married. The accumulative incidence rises from 5 percent by age 15, to 9 percent by age 20, and to 16 percent by age 25. The increase thereafter is slow and the incidence seems to plateau at a 24-26 percent level from age 35 onward. The selective bias toward homosexuality in the older unmarried which was so evident in males seems absent among females, at least after age 35.

Age-specific incidence is highest among the never married, modest among the widowed, separated, or divorced, and minimal among the married. The figures for the never married rise from 2 percent in early adolescence to a maximum of 10 percent in age-period 36-40 and then decline rapidly. The widowed, separated, or divorced maintain a 6-7 percent age-specific incidence until age 35 after which it declines to 3 or 4 percent through the forties. The married sample had an age-specific incidence of 1 to 2 percent in all 5-year age-periods of life up to 60.

Aside from marital status, the only other variables strongly correlated with homosexuality appear to be religious devotion and education. The religiously inactive generally have twice the incidence of numbers with homosexual experience as do the devout. The better educated tend to have more experienced members also. This unexpected correlation Kinsey suggested might be due to greater heterosexual moral restraints, to delayed marriage, and even to a great acceptance of homosexuality on the higher social levels. Frankly, none of these explanations now strike us as especially tenable and none of them were empirically tested.

Ross (19) and Mendelsohn made a tabulation, published in 1958, of U.C.L.A. students who were outpatients of the psychiatric division of the Student Health Service and who were diagnosed as homosexual. The nature of the sample and the fact that disclosure of homosexual activity or impulse was not always recorded by the examining physician renders the study useless for our purposes, but it is worth mention since the low incidence is sometimes cited. Some 3 percent of the students who were outpatients between 1946 and 1957 were diagnosed as homosexual, the criteria being (1) current homosexual activity, or (2) three or more acts since age 16, or (3) strong homosexual impulses.

Gebhard (7) and other members of the Institute for Sex Research, described in connection with their study of male sex offenders a control group of 477 white males with less than a college education. These men had never been incarcerated or convicted of any offense. The data concerning the incidence of homosexuality among them should substitute for the data on the noncollege sample published by Kinsey in 1948.

Some 34 percent had had postpubertal homosexual experience—a figure remarkably close to Kinsey’s famous 37 percent. Some 15 percent had had more than incidental experience, and 3.4 percent had had extensive (21 or more partners) experience.

The accumulative incidence was 16 percent by age 12, 21 percent by 14, and then remains between 25 and 27 percent thereafter until at least age 30. These figures are remarkably like those of the grammar school educated sample reported upon in 1948 by Kinsey. They are much lower than those of the badly prison-contaminated, high school educated sample of that date. Compared to the college educated, this control group is similar from age 14 to 21 and then the college educated slowly surpass them until by age 30 they lead by 8 percentage points.
Simon (22) and other Institute members completed a survey of a random probability sample of white male and female college students in 1966. Five hundred ninety-three male and 584 female students were interviewed by National Opinion Research Center personnel using a questionnaire prepared by the Institute staff. Only 8 percent of the males and 1 percent of the females reported postpubertal homosexual activity.

Concluding Remarks

Clarity of definition is a sine qua non of science and a workable definition of homosexuality must be formulated by those studying the phenomenon. We have found the most practical definition of homosexual behavior to be: physical contact between two individuals of the same gender which both recognize as being sexual in nature and which ordinarily results in sexual arousal. Psychological homosexual response may be defined as the desire for such physical contact and/or conscious sexual arousal from thinking of or seeing persons of the same gender. These rather simple pragmatic definitions are adequate for most studies and are especially suitable for survey research since they can be transmuted into clear and brief questions. They also have the advantage of being applicable to any human group in the world, whereas more elaborate definitions are apt to run afoul of cultural variations in the significance of behavior.

This is not to deny the utility of other definitions to be used in different and more specialized studies. Homosexual behavior may be gestural and verbal rather than solely a matter of contact, and it is legitimate to investigate both unconscious and symbolic facets of homosexuality. But for most purposes the simple unequivocal definitions are best.

It is evident from the foregoing review of the literature that we have been measuring different groups using different units of measurement. This makes direct comparisons impossible and consequently the incidence of overt homosexuality is moot even in those few segments of the population which have been surveyed. One of the first tasks to which we must address ourselves is to promulgate and insist upon standard measurements. Accumulative incidence or simple “ever-never” incidence should be clearly labeled as to the ages involved: one should certainly differentiate between pre- and post-pubescent incidence and I suspect one should in addition set aside early adolescence as a unit. In studies which focus on sexuality to a substantial degree there should also be age-specific incidence. It is not only useless, but confusing to learn that X percent of a group had had homosexual experience at some time in life—one does not know how much was confined to childhood and how much was in adult life. Stipulating that the activity was postpubertal is helpful, but insufficient. It is clear that in terms of social and psychological significance transitory experimentation around puberty is quite different from activity engaged in as an adult.

Since the context determines the meaning of sexual activity, any serious study of homosexuality must take into account heterosexuality. The Institute for Sex Research devised a seven-point scale to adequately conceptualize the continuity of heterosexuality and homosexuality: a 0 on the scale is one who is exclusively heterosexual, a 1 has incidental homosexuality, a 2 has more than incidental homosexuality, but is still more hetero than homosexual, a 3 is evenly balanced, a 4 is mainly homosexual but retains a substantial heterosexual component, a 5 has only incidental heterosexuality, and a 6 is exclusively homosexual. With such a scale one can refer with flexibility and accuracy to an individual’s status. For example, we can say a boy was a 1 on the scale until he went to a juvenile prison where he became a 3, but after his release and resumption of contact with girls he became a 2. In the original Kinsey publications a person was given one number which was a composite of both overt behavior and psychologic response. I have felt this averaging was insufficient for those cases wherein the psychologic response and the behavior were discrepant. Hence, I recommend that the scale numbers be used like fractions—the upper numeral expressing the psychologic response and the lower the overt behavior. Thus and 0/1 would be someone with no conscious interest in homosexuality but with a small amount (relative to his heterosexuality) of current homosexuality. A 3/1 would be someone with as much homo as heterosexual psychological response, but with a small amount of current homosexuality. Most persons have the same numeral for both their psychic and overt, a moderate minority differ by one point, and a discrepancy of two or more points indicates stress and/or emotional or social disturbance.

The above concept is important when one is concerned with incidence, for one must ask incidence of what? From a practical viewpoint of mental health and social problems, persons rating 1 are not important—trouble seldom arises until a rating of 2 or more is involved.

Turning to the unresolved issue of incidence of male overt homosexuality in the U.S.A., it is possible to evaluate the surveys and make some crude estimations. The Hohman and the Ross studies may be disregarded due to their extreme intrinsic bias, and the Terman figure should be omitted since it does not deal with overt behavior.
It seems clear that the bulk of the incidence of overt homosexuality in postpubertal life occurs between puberty and age 16. Finger (5) found that nearly three-quarters of the 27 percent incidence he discovered was compiled prior to age 17. Kinsey (14) found that while 33 percent of the college educated had had overt homosexual contact including orgasm, the incidence was 23 percent by age 16—leaving only a 10 percentage point increase over the next 9 years. The high incidence reported among high school students by Ramsey (17) corroborates these findings.

It is also quite evident from the Kinsey data that beyond the average age at marriage those males who remain unmarried reveal a slow but steady increase in the incidence of homosexually-experienced individuals. This, however, does not necessarily imply that persons have their initial homosexual contact at these older ages; it simply means that persons without homosexual experience continue to marry and leave the ranks of the bachelors increasingly composed of individuals with homosexual experience. Folk knowledge is confirmed in this instance, and it seems safe to say that half or more of these males still unmarried by age 40 have had overt homosexual contact.

Another generalization derived chiefly from Kinsey data which may be safely made is that very few men have their initial homosexual experience after marriage. Indeed, the age-specific incidence of homosexual activity among married males of college education is low (2-3 percent) and that is largely accounted for by men who had had homosexual experience prior to marriage.

Returning to the original question of what is the accumulative incidence of postpubertal homosexual experience among males, a body of data exists only for the college-educated, upper-middle, upper-socio-economic level. Kinsey (14) presents roughly an incidence of one-third, a figure which remains essentially stable from age 25 on through the remainder of life. Finger's 27 percent incidence for students in college (a figure precisely equal to Kinsey's incidence for unmarried college students at age 20) might be expected to rise a few percentage points before plateauing, and this would result in a final incidence of close to one-third. Hamilton's males (10), 90 percent of whom were college educated, may be presumed to have an incidence figure at least equaling and probably surpassing those of Kinsey and Finger since 17 percent of the Hamilton sample reported homosexual contact since age 18. On the other hand, Bromley (1) and the Gilbert Survey (9) incidence figures for college students are only 13 and 12 percent respectively, and Simon's 8 percent figure is lowest of all. I feel these figures are erroneously low.

Obtaining truthful responses on a subject as taboo as homosexuality requires winning the trust of and rapport with the respondent and also probing rather than accepting the initial reply at face value. Without this personal and probing element, a questionnaire survey will always produce low incidence figures for taboo behavior. Both the Bromley and Gilbert surveys were questionnaire and the percentage of returns for the former was so low (roughly one in five) as to cast grave doubts on the findings, while the Gilbert survey did not reveal the return rate. In the Finger, Hamilton, and Kinsey surveys the subjects knew the investigators and rapport did exist. The Institute for Sex Research project directed by Simon had middle-aged female, part-time interviewers hired by N.O.R.C. interviewing the male college students, and I suspect that this (coupled with taking responses at face value without further probing) caused an appreciable number of students to conceal their homosexual experience. We do know these women were obtaining extraordinarily low masturbation frequencies until we reworded the question to make admission easier, and I believe the depressing effect on homosexual incidence was equally profound. It is unfortunate we did not recognize this situation in time to reword the homosexual question or instruct the interviewers to probe.

All in all, at our present state of knowledge I think we can say that between one-quarter and one-third of the adult males of the college-educated segment of the population have had overt homosexual experience since puberty, and that most of this was confined to adolescence. For persons of less than college education we have only the Institute data reported by Gebhard et al. (7), and again the incidence is in the one-quarter to one-third range. This lack of difference in incidence tends to support our feeling that homosexuality is not strongly correlated with social level.

The incidence of predominant homosexuality (i.e., persons rating 4 to 6 on our scale) is of more immediate concern to us since this may be equated with current activity. In the U.S.A., only Kinsey differentiated degree of homosexual involvement and so we must rely upon Institute data. Again confining ourselves to the college-educated sample, the married adults are seen to have at any age roughly 1 to 1.5 percent predominantly homosexual members while the unmarried, a minority group, have a steadily increasing proportion of predominantly homosexual individuals ranging from about 12 percent at age 25 up to nearly one-third by age 35. Weighting by marital status we can say that about 4 percent of the white college-educated adult males are predominantly homosexual. This crude estimate coincides rather well
with some European calculations and with Havelock Ellis’ guess. It should be noted at this juncture that among the unmarried exclusive homosexuality (6 on the scale) is commoner than predominant homosexuality (4 or 5 on the scale), so that the bulk of the 4 percent are exclusively homosexual.

The above figure does not agree with much of what Kinsey published in 1948. The discrepancy is due to the previously mentioned bias introduced by prison inmates and, to a lesser degree, other sampling bias.

The data regarding female homosexuality is somewhat less difficult to assay than the male data. Institute data show that unlike the male, the unmarried female does not concentrate initial homosexual experience in early adolescence, but presents a rather even rate of increment up to age 30 when the incidence plateaus at 17 percent for the college-educated sample. Davis’ unmarried college alumni had a similar incidence of 19 percent. Hamilton’s 100 married women had an incidence surpassing that of Kinsey since 26 percent reported overt experience after age 18. These three studies of college-educated females make it seem that the ultimate incidence lies somewhere between 15 and 30 percent for the unmarried.

The incidence of overt homosexual experience of unmarried female students in college seems to lie between 4 and 7 percent. Bromley’s data give 4 percent, the Gilbert Youth Survey 6.4 percent, and the Kinsey figure for age 18 is 7 percent. The Simon incidence of 1 percent is almost certainly far too low.

Since the incidence for the unmarried is only 9 percent by age 20, since the majority of females marry before age 25 when the incidence for the unmarried has risen to 14 percent, and since very few females have their initial homosexual contact after marriage, it follows that for the adult female population as a whole the final accumulative incidence is probably around 10 to 12 percent.

The incidence of predominantly homosexual females is less than that for males. Between 3 and 8 percent, depending on age, of the unmarried females rate 4 to 6 on our scale. Some 2 to 7 percent of the widowed, separated, or divorced do likewise, but almost no married females are predominantly homosexual. Taking into account the percentages of adult females married, it would seem that in the total adult female population the incidence of predominantly homosexual individuals is between 1 and 2 percent, probably nearer 1.

Religious devoutness not unexpectedly correlates strongly with incidence of homosexual experience, the more devout having a lower incidence. Educational attainment, on the other hand, correlates positively: the better educated having a higher incidence of homosexually experienced persons.

The European studies tend to agree more often than not with the findings in the U.S.A. Our estimate that about 4 percent of males are predominantly homosexual is close to Römer’s figure of 5.8 percent (1.9 percent exclusive plus 3.9 percent “bisexual”) and Hirschfeld’s 5.7 percent (2.3 percent exclusive and 3.4 “bisexual”). Their “bisexual” category seems to correspond to our 3.5 rating. Friedelberg’s 23 percent overall incidence for German males is not too far below our postulated range of one-quarter to one-third having had postpubertal homosexual experience and is closer yet to Gebhard’s accumulative incidence figure for adult males with less than college education (26 percent by age 30).

The college students of Giese in Germany and of Spencer in England reported incidences agreeing with some U.S. studies. Spencer’s 13 percent agrees beautifully with Bromley’s 13 percent and the Gilbert Survey’s 12 percent. Giese’s figures of 19 percent is in the same general range. The Finger and Kinsey incidence figures (27 percent at college age) are not in accord with the European findings, but some of the discrepancy may be due to the greater rapport these American investigators established with their respondents, and also to selectivity in the low return rate of the questionnaire studies of Bromley, Gilbert, and Giese.

The very low (4 percent) incidence among 18-19 year-old Danish draftees reported by Hertoff may be due in large measure to the far greater availability of heterosexual coitus in that culture. Also asking young men just as they are entering the authoritarian military structure is not conducive to admissions of deviant behavior.

The Giese 4 percent accumulative incidence figure for postpubertal homosexual experience among German female college students matches Bromley’s U.S. figure and is not too far below the Gilbert Survey (6.4 percent). It falls far short of the Kinsey incidence of 9 percent by age 20. Again, this may be in part due to the difference in the method of acquiring data.

From the foregoing pages it is obvious that we need more surveys using a standard or at least directly comparable methodology and terminology. In these future surveys we must not confine attention to the better educated and more easily available segment of the population, but investigate all socioeconomic levels. Lastly, some studies should deal with incidence of homosexuality among the more important ethnic minority groups such as Negroes, Puerto Ricans, and Mexicans about whom we presently know nothing.
References

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