HOMOSEXUAL PANIC

Homosexual panic, sometimes known as Kempf's Syndrome, is the irrational and stressful reaction to the fear that one is, or is becoming homosexual. The intensity of the reaction, which was first observed in the second decade of the present century, probably reflects the extreme taboo placed on homosexuality during the first half of the 20th century. With the easing of the taboo, homosexual panic is probably becoming less common.


Reflections by psychiatrists who believe that homosexual acts display pathology: homosexual thoughts in heterosexuals, evidently, do not.

3556. DANNELS, JOANNE C. "Homosexual Panic," Perspectives in Psychiatric Care, 10 (1972), 106-111.

Discusses the disruptive effect of an assertive lesbian in a hospital psychiatric unit, where the other patients exhibited anxiety, apprehension, uneasiness, and a sense of going to pieces.


Defines acute homosexual panic as an acute schizophrenic reaction, usually temporary and "based on the patient's fear of loss of control of unconscious wishes to offer himself as a homosexual object which he feels will result in the most dire consequences."


Discusses the bizarre case of a 29-year-old male homosexual who experienced feelings of doom, palpitations, diaphoresis, and lightheadedness—"heterosexual panic"—because of the commencement of feelings of sexual attraction toward women. After treatment the attacks abated, and he began a new homosexual relationship.


As a result of Kempf's work with disturbed soldiers and sailors in World War I, he introduced the concept of homosexual panic, which is consequently sometimes known as "Kempf's syndrome." See Chapter 10, "The Psychology of the Acute Homosexual Panic" (pp. 477-515).


See pp. 461-64 on morbid fear of being taken for a "sodomite." Légrand du Saulle (1830-1886) was a French alienist who founded the Société de Médecine Légale.

From evaluation of responses to films, differentiates the concept of homosexual threat from the concepts of fear of homosexuals, homosexual panic, and homosexual prejudice.

The author, a Belgrade physician, regards homosexual panic as an acute delusion episode that is not followed by a process of psychotic development.


Viewing the military setting as a culturally specific stress site generating pseudohomosexual anxieties in predisposed individuals, presents three case studies illustrating the power and dependency conflicts, sexual symbolization, projective defenses, and restitutitional violence which characterize these patients.

J. PSYCHOMETRIC ASSESSMENT

With the increasing acceptance in the beginning decades of the 20th century that male and female are a spectrum rather than an absolute contrast, interest began to be felt in measuring the presence of male and female characteristics in each individual. Initially these inquiries were accompanied by an unconscious bias that too much admixture was undesirable and abnormal—in fact an indication of male homosexuality or lesbianism. In the 1960s, however, the very androgynous which had been despised or at any rate not positively valued, came to be looked upon by some researchers—namely Sandra L. Bem and her associates—as an asset. Thus, despite the seemingly scientific character of the psychometric protocols, this field has been much bedevilled by ideological expectations about sex roles, and many of the apparent findings should be treated with a healthy dose of scepticism.


Reports on the development and cross-validation of a 31-item MMPI Gender Dysphoria (Gd) subscale intended to discriminate between gender identity patients and matched