XIV. SOCIOLOGY

A. SOCIAL THEORY

Inasmuch as homosexual behavior by definition involves the interaction of two or more persons, it would seem to be a prime case for social science investigation. Yet the founders of modern sociology, both in Europe and in North America, tended to ignore homosexuality, and it is only in recent years that social theory has attempted to come to grips with it. This new seriousness is linked to the fact that an increasing number of trained scholars are openly homosexual, and can combine experiential with theoretical perspectives. Current bibliography may be monitored in Social Sciences Index (1974– ) and Sociological Abstracts (1952–).

Critique of the social-psychological tendency to conflate the consequences of discrimination with the internal formation of self-images.

Following in part a Marxist-feminist approach, "puts forth some structural linkages which set homosexuality within the context of the larger histories of gender, family, and production." Argues that Western industrial capitalism has given birth to the new configuration of the gay world, i.e. modern homosexuality as we know it.

Comparative study of the social psychology of oppression, presenting Jews, blacks, and gay people as salient instances in our society. Using a neo-Marxist methodology, Adam examines the process whereby such groups are inferiorized, the countertactics evolved to cope with inferiorization, and how such responses coalesce with structures of domination.

Emphasizes situations in which social structure restricts access by members of one sex to the other, as in unisex communities (boarding schools and prisons) and in certain
occupational and ethnic groups. In these circumstances homosexuality may be functional.


2854. BELL, ALAN P., and MARTIN S. WEINBERG. Homosexualities: A Study of Diversity among Men and Women. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1978. 505 pp. Sets forth conclusions derived from in-depth interviews of 979 San Francisco Bay area residents, conducted under the auspices of the Kinsey Institute of Indiana University, mainly in 1969. Offers a five-fold typology of homosexuals: close-coupled, open-coupled, functional, dysfunctional, and asexual. This typology has been criticized as not strictly following from the data (as claimed), and as serving to bolster the book's underlying message--its ideology, so to speak—that is to say, the integrationist notion that in terms of sociosexual adjustment homosexuals are much like everyone else. Compare M. S. Weinberg and C. J. Williams, below—to which this book is to some extent a sequel.

2855. DANK, BARRY M. "The Social Construction and Destruction of the Homosexual," Humanity and Society, 4 (1980), 133-47. Social science has often acted to transform persons into objects and things. Through acceptance of the dehumanized concept of a homosexual problem, social science allows itself to be transformed into a means of social control.


2857. DANNECKER, MARTIN, and REIMUT REICHE. Der gewöhnliche Homosexuelle: eine soziologische Untersuchung über männliche Homosexuelle in der Bundesrepublik. Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1974. 430 pp. Using questionnaires and interviews (summarized in statistical tables), attempts a full-scale description of the individual and social development of male homosexuals in West Germany. Deals with coming out, friendship, sexuality, employment, the homosexual subculture, and psychological maladjustment. For an English summary of some of the findings, see: Reimut Reiche and Martin Dannecker,


Argues that historically certain closely knit groups (e.g., Old Testament Israelites, Parsees, and modern armies) have sought to maintain a strong sense of social boundaries, using such deviations as homosexuality, bestiality, and transvestism as markers of exclusion from the group. This approach was anticipated by Fritz Wittels, "Collective Defense Mechanisms against Homosexuality," *Psychoanalytic Review*, 31 (1944), 19-33.


Until the end of the 1970s Dutch sociological investigation of homosexuality was concerned with the interplay of social discrimination and individual deviance. In the 1980s departments of gay studies were established in some Dutch universities (Amsterdam, Utrecht), while research approaches came under the influence of the "constructionist" trend.


Classification of homosexual types according to the degree that they have internalized the values of the environing society.


In keeping with symbolic interactionism, holds that sexual behavior is learned through social scripts which vary cross-culturally and historically. Sets forth a model of psychosexual development, articulated into various phases of the life cycle. See pp. 129-216, 235-59.


Not concerned primarily with homosexuality, this influential work deals in part with "passing" and the problems that arise from the creation of the self under the constraints that require such a strategem.


A French anarcho-socialist thinker's observations on the social and cultural determination of the situation of homosexuals.
Nine essays of high quality on such topics as occupational choice, employment discrimination, leisure, religion, public opinion, male prostitution, and schools. This book is a reissue of a special number of International Review of Modern Sociology, 9:2 (1979).

Collection of twelve papers written from a social construction viewpoint, stressing divergent processes of socialization within present constraints of gender identity. The writers tend to regard homosexuality as something that is chosen and maintained, rather than constitutionally or biologically given. They also emphasize everyday problems, which theory must confront.

Discerns a number of types in the English homosexual community: the bisexual, the married man, the self-isolated homosexual, the "fully sublimated" homosexual, prostitutes (with five subtypes), "sugar daddies," prison "queers," pub and club types, pedophiles, psychopaths, voyeurs, and transvestites.

A somewhat opaque French New Left essay, which grounds the social fear of homosexuality in the replication of the Oedipal family under capitalist conditions and finds the transgressive essence of the homosexual challenge in male anality.


Based on Los Angeles observations, describes homosexual public meeting places; patterns of public encounter and interaction; and communication and socialization. Stresses the gay bar as a key institution. Dr. Hooker was perhaps the first important American social scientist to adopt the working hypothesis that homosexuals were not per se neurotic or maladjusted, an idea one can see


Posits four models, two regarding the deviant behavior as acceptable (orientation; role) and two as unacceptable (condition; false consciousness).

In this group endeavor, coordinated and largely written by Professor Lautmann, the chief emphasis is on the many facets of discrimination against homosexuals (law, medicine, church, media, etc.). There is also a major section on the response and resistance on the part of homosexuals themselves.

An exemplary annotated bibliography, the items included being chosen for their impact in terms of being widely read, cited, or discussed. Contains about 140 entries, grouped into three general sections: theoretical perspectives, methodological assessments, and social world.

Organized around a minority-group framework, this collection of 21 papers (many of them reprints) describes many aspects of gay men's place in society. There are two main sections: Oppression (negative public opinion; legal sanctions; therapeutic abuse); and Social World (identity formation; lifestyles; gathering places; political movements).

Psychoanalytic approach to the problem of conformity, which was much discussed in the Eisenhower years. Perceives homosexuality as a response of nonconformity or rebellion; since the conformance pressure in society is becoming more intense, so is homosexuality.


2878. MURRAY, STEPHEN. Social Theory, Homosexual Reality. New York: Scholarship Committee, Gay Academic Union, 1984. 83 pp. (Gai Saber Monographs, 3) Concise but searching review of leading theories—Movement, symbolic interactionist, functionalist, psychoanalytic—as they bear on sociology and anthropology. This pithy and challenging monograph is an essential guide to the strengths and weaknesses of the social theory of same-sex behavior.

2879. PAUL, WILLIAM, et al (eds.). Homosexuality: Social, Psychological and Biological Issues. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 1982. 416 pp. A collective work, conceived under the sponsorship of the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues, with the aim of providing a fair, comprehensive, and positive synthesis of the achievements of the social and biological sciences. Unfortunately, the individual essays—which are often valuable in themselves—are not organized into a coherent whole.

2880. PLUMMER, KENNETH. Sexual Stigma: An Interactionist Account. Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1975. 258 pp. Applying symbolic interactionism, Plummer concentrates on such questions as stigma, career construction, subcultural development, and interactional problems—with special emphasis on homosexuality. Although it ranks as an important contribution, this book originated as a doctoral dissertation, and is not exempt from the longueurs that afflict the species.
A collection of eight essays, some new and others reprinted, by English academics who are generally adherents of the social construction approach. Influenced by Michel Foucault, they hold that, although same-sex behavior may have existed throughout human history, the concept of the "homosexual" is a particularly modern idea which has structured recent patterns of experience. Culture, rather than nature, is the decisive shaping force.

Interpreting interviews with 89 gay men and 57 lesbians in Chicago and San Francisco, seeks to determine developmental attributes, sexual behavior, romantic attachments, psychopathology, family background, and demographic characteristics.

In this British study, 150 male homosexuals were considered in three groups of 50: those in prison, those currently under treatment, and those who had never been in prison or under treatment. These were matched with several control groups. Concludes that male homosexuals differ from male heterosexuals mainly in the choice of sex object. See also his previous monograph, published under the name of "Gordon Westwood," A Minority: A Report on the Life of the Male Homosexual in Great Britain (London: Longmans, Green, 1960).

Explores ways in which members of an upper-class gay community relate to each other and to the enviroring straight world. Discusses the gay concepts of space and time; rituals, interactions, and relationships; vocabulary, literature, and ideology; and secrecy, stigma, and existential identity.

Oscillating between present concerns and 19th and 20th century foundations, Weeks attempts to unravel the web of historical, theoretical, and political forces that have produced the contemporary "crisis of sexual meanings and values." Includes discussion of the New Right, the pornography conflict, Freud, and the sexological tradition (which the author holds has ascribed an inflated impor-


Working under the auspices of the Kinsey Institute (compare A. Bell and M. Weinberg, above), the authors collected data on ca. 2400 homosexuals in the United States, the Netherlands, and Denmark. The book attempts a comparative ethnographic sketch of gay life in each of the three countries, and provides data on passing, self-esteem, social skills, social isolation, employment, and problems of adjustment.

**B. METHODOLOGICAL PROBLEMS**

The clandestinity in which the majority of homosexuals continue to exist poses problems of sampling, inasmuch as a truly random sample is usually impossible to attain. Despite every precaution, there remains the possibility that data are skewed toward the more overt, easily accessible types. This danger is particularly evident in the so-called "convenience sample," whereby responses are collected from self-selected volunteers. Conversely, publication of some which have been obtained by surreptitious means may violate "closet rights."


Calls for more sophisticated methodology, permitting the disclosure of the multifariousness of ways in which individuals are homosexual, and for awareness of the propensity of theoretical bias to cloud our comprehension of the quality of real experience.

2889. **BULLOUGH, VERN.** "Challenges to Societal Attitudes toward Homosexuality in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries," *Social Science*