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AN EXPLORATION OF INTIMACY BETWEEN GAY MEN

City University of New York PH.D. 1982

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AN EXPLORATION OF INTIMACY BETWEEN GAY MEN

by

ELLIOT RUTTER

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty
in Psychology in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy,
The City University of New York.

1982

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1982

This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Psychology in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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Abstract

AN EXPLORATION OF INTIMACY BETWEEN GAY MEN

by

Elliot Rutter

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The purpose of this study was to explore how the following variables facilitate and/or inhibit intimacy between gay men: 1) life-span developmental factors; 2) the historical determinants and sociocultural context of intimate relationships; and 3) the individual's sex-role identity. Sources used are published empirical and theoretical literature and personal clinical observations.

Homosexuality is defined as a need system for same-sex emotional affectional, and sexual intimacy. The homosexual boy's gradual awareness of his needs is seen to affect his early same-sex interactions, which, in turn, affect later intimate relationships. A "confused" homosexual identity -- which inhibits intimacy -- is distinguished from a stable, integrated gay identity -- which facilitates intimacy -- by the extent to which the individual is in conflict about his homosexual needs because he has internalized the homophobia of the dominant culture.

The existence of a gay satellite culture is seen to facilitate the transition from homosexual to gay identity and enhance the potential

for intimacy. However, aspects of this culture -- particularly the emphasis on conformity, sexuality, and masculinity -- are postulated to provide escape from the homosexual male's potential freedom to question traditional sociocultural assumptions, biases, and institutional structures. This is seen to inhibit the development of an integrated gay identity, and therefore intimacy.

In reaction to the cultural confusion between homosexuality and sex-role inversion, the gay male community is seen to embrace traditional masculine values which inhibit intimacy. To the extent this confusion is internalized, the individual's sex-role identity may be "confused," and his intimate relationships inhibited. However, the opportunity to question restrictive, stereotyped sex-roles may provide for greater sex-role flexibility and sex-role transcendence, and thus may facilitate intimacy between gay men.

Ramey's concept of the intimate friendship is discussed as an alternative model for gay male intimate relationships. It is suggested that intimacy between gay men will be facilitated by: questioning traditional assumptions and biases about homosexuality, intimacy, and masculinity; reevaluating the relevance of traditional models of intimate relationships to the gay male experience; eliminating homophobia; encouraging tolerance for, and comfort with, ambiguity, confusion, and the lack of external structure; and, encouraging and supporting creative solutions to satisfy unique individual intimate needs.

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I feel fortunate to have had a committee who understood the significance, to me, of my task. They provided support, encouragement, and respected my freedom to pursue my interests in non-traditional ways. My special thanks to Douglas Kimmel for his sponsorship of, enthusiasm for, and belief in the project. His patience, responsivity, and his guidance -- demonstrated by his listening, questioning, challenging, and suggesting alternative perspectives -- were invaluable. My thanks to Larry Gould for warmly welcoming me back, and for his sensitivity and respect. My thanks to Hal Wilensky for his interest, warmth, and years of supervision and teaching which were so important in shaping my professional consciousness. My thanks to Jim Levin and Jim Harrison for their responsivity, encouragement, excitement, and editorial assistance.

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INTRODUCTION

Establishing and maintaining satisfying intimate relationships is difficult in our complex, rapidly changing society. The social reality of alternative lifestyles is becoming increasingly clear. Traditional cultural values, conceptions, and ideals regarding intimacy are being questioned, and their relevance to current individual needs are being reevaluated. Consequently, the social parameters of intimate relationships are changing and unclear. This creates a potential source of conflict and confusion for the individual, as well as the potential for personal and interpersonal growth.

The task of attempting to actualize their needs for satisfying intimate relationships is different for gay men and lesbian women, and for heterosexual men and women as well. Each group has different needs, is subject to different psychological and social forces, and receives different kinds and levels of support from society for its intimate relationships.

Gay men, in our society, have a unique task and a unique opportunity and challenge. Their task is to satisfy many of their needs for emotional, affectional, and sexual intimacy with other gay men.

The uniqueness of the gay man's task derives from two basic factors. The first pertains to the fact that he is homosexual. In order to relate intimately to one another, gay men must overcome both external constraints and internalized ambivalences. In order to satisfy their needs for emotional, affectional and, especially, sexual intimacy with each other, gay men must face the possibility of moral, religious, psychiatric, legal, and even criminal condemnation and penalties.

Growing up in a homophobic[1] society, homosexual men, because of their "difference," are repeatedly confronted with the possibility of actual or

potential rejection, narcissistic injury and battered self-esteem from their interaction with significant others and with a generally hostile environment. Internalized homophobia feeds the potential for lowered self-esteem and guilt, as well as ambivalence toward other men -- fear, anxiety, dislike and avoidance of the desired and idealized other man.

In traditional theories of sex-differences, and certainly to the lay public, sexual orientation was assumed to be causally connected to masculine/feminine personality characteristics and sex-role behavior. Homosexuality was assumed to be causally related to sex-role inversion and gender-identity confusion -- i.e., if a man was homosexual, he was assumed to resemble a woman psychologically and behaviorally.

To the extent this cultural confusion is internalized by the homosexual man, it would likely feed lowered self-esteem, and engender anxiety, conflict, confusion, and ambivalence about "masculine" and "feminine" aspects of his personality and his sex-role identity. This internalized confusion certainly has been a major factor in keeping many homosexual men from exploring and accepting their homosexuality, and from potentially developing a positive gay identity. Thus, the cultural confusion, if internalized, could result in the denial of crucial aspects of the self, compartmentalization, identity confusion, repression, and alienation from one's own body, sexuality, and feelings.

It would be expected that, for the homosexual man, these anxieties and conflicts would most likely occur within the context of the individual's relationship with other men. To the extent that this cultural confusion is internalized, it would seem reasonable to expect it to act as an impediment to intimacy between gay men.

The fear of being labeled homosexual -- i.e., not a man -- for doing or feeling anything "feminine" has been a powerful agent of social control in maintaining culturally approved sex-role behavior in men. It serves to keep men constantly measuring their "performance" against unrealistic cultural sex-role stereotypes, and comparing themselves to their main competitors and judges -- other men. Thus, the confusion between homosexuality and sex-role inversion, and the fear of homosexuality (i.e., homophobia) serve to keep men competitive and comparative with one another, and ultimately to keep them from being intimate with each other.

The events of the past ten years have offered homosexual men the opportunity to experience a basic change in their sense of self -- an opportunity to have self-validating experiences with other gay men, to develop a positive gay identity and a crucial support network. However, ten years is a short time, and the task is a monumental one. There is still conflict and confusion within the gay male community -- and certainly intrapsychically -- about the issues of sexuality, masculinity, and sex-roles, as well as about the parameters of intimate relationships between gay men -- including friendship, romantic and/or sexual relationships. This subcultural confusion potentially results in individual confusion and anxiety. At the same time, this conflict and confusion creates the potential for personal and interpersonal growth.

The second basic factor making the gay man's task unique pertains to the fact that he is a man, and looks to relationships with other men to satisfy his needs for emotional, affectional, and sexual intimacy. In our society, male/male relationships have traditionally been governed by sex-role expectations which encourage competition and struggles for power and control, little self-disclosure, emotional distance and withdrawal, and an aversion

to vulnerability, openness and emotional and/or interpersonal risk-taking.

Men are taught to be sociable and task or activity oriented with each other rather than intimate. They are taught to focus their intimate needs on their heterosexual romantic relationships and not on their same-sex relationships. Certainly romance and sex are not generally viewed as potential aspects of male/male intimacy. Yet, these are some of the most important aspects of what gay men seek from each other.

The recent changes in the conceptualization of the male sex-role have arisen mainly in response to changes in women's conceptions of their role and in their sex-role behavior. They have not, for the most part, grown out of men's discontent with their relationships with other men. Men's relationships with each other remain sociable, functional and pragmatic, but only rarely intimate.

Their unique task presents gay men with unique opportunities and challenges: to question and reevaluate traditional, restrictive and biased conceptions of intimacy between men; to free themselves from the oppressive internalized homophobia, and develop a positive gay identity through their intimate relations with other gay men and a supportive gay male community; to reevaluate traditional, restrictive conceptions of the male sex role; to explore and reevaluate traditional conceptions and boundaries between romantic relationships, sexual relationships and friendships; and, to actively work to meet their individual needs for intimate relationships with other gay men in unique, creative ways.

Clearly, numerous psychological and sociocultural factors affect the gay man's conception and experience of intimacy and define the parameters of his intimate relationships with other gay men. The primary goals of the current study are:

1) to identify some of the most significant psychological and socio-cultural factors affecting the individual gay man's phenomenological conception and experience of intimacy; and

2) to understand how these factors serve to facilitate and/or oppose the establishment and maintenance of intimate relationships between gay men.

Intimate relationships between gay men must be looked at within the context of the nature of intimacy and the parameters of intimate relationships operative within the larger, dominant heterosexually-oriented culture. The most striking things about intimacy are the relativity of the individual's conception and experience of it, and the complex, multifaceted, multi-determined nature of intimate relationships. The primary purposes of the first chapter are to seek a clearer understanding of the basic nature of intimacy and the basic characteristics of intimate relationships, as well as to identify those psychological and sociocultural factors which determine and affect the individual's conception and experience of intimacy and the nature of his intimate relationships.

The data for this task are provided by the observation and study of intimacy and intimate relationships by social scientists during the 20th century. The most striking characteristics of this field of study are: 1) the complexity of the issue; 2) the diversity of perspectives and methodological approaches utilized for conceptual understanding, observa-ation, and empirical research; and 3) the consequent contradictions and confusion in the data.

Raush (1977) recognized the complexity, diversity, and confusion characteristic of the field. He stressed the necessity of searching for common themes, rather than conclusions, from the varied conceptual approaches

and sources of data.[2] His point is well taken. The search for common themes and issues appears to be the most profitable approach to understanding the mass of social science data regarding intimacy and intimate relationships. As such, it is reflective of the current approach to exploring intimacy between gay men.

The second focus of chapter one, therefore, will be an attempt to examine the diversity of conceptual perspectives and methodological approaches utilized to study intimate relationships, identify issues that complicate the study of intimate relationships, and to point out sources of contradictions and confusion in the data.

As we proceed, it may be helpful to keep in mind Levinger's (1977) perspective on his study of intimacy because it captures much of my own experience in exploring the nature of intimacy between gay men:

> How then can I separate fact from fiction, simplicity from complexity? In the forest of contemporary interpersonal relationships, my own view is obscure. I cannot be sure that I see the trees, let alone the larger forests. I cannot truly distinguish between essence and transition. My own life is limited to one moment of history, my experiences confined to a small corner of the world (p. 3-5).

CHAPTER ONE

PERSPECTIVES ON INTIMACY

The most striking aspects of intimacy are the relativity of the individual's conception of it, and the complex, multifaceted, and multi-determined nature of intimate relationships. The primary purposes of this chapter are to seek a clearer understanding of the basic nature of intimacy and the basic characteristics of intimate relationships as well as to identify those factors that determine and affect the individual's conception and experience of intimacy and the nature of his intimate relationships.

In order to clarify and understand this complex issue, attention will be focused on: 1) differentiating intimate relationships from other types of interpersonal relationships; 2) defining the general characteristics of intimate relationships; and, 3) identifying several compounding variables that determine the complexity and relativity of the individual's experience of intimacy.

INTIMATE AND OTHER RELATIONSHIPS

The first priority is to narrow down and elucidate the area of specific interest in the current study -- intimate relationships -- from the more general area of interpersonal relationships.

Levinger (1977) distinguishes between three basic levels at which one person can "relate" to another: 1) unilateral awareness -- no interaction, but unilateral impressions or awareness of the other;

2) surface contacts -- two-way interaction, either as a transitory first meeting between strangers, or recurring segmented role relations; 3) mutuality -- partners possess shared knowledge of each other, care emotionally for each other, develop a degree of mutual interdependence, and develop and maintain a unique sense of shared experience, and private norms regulating their interactions.

Davis (1973) in developing his science of intimate relations -- philemics -- differentiates between intimates: friends, lovers, spouses, and siblings; and non-intimates: strangers, role-relations, acquaintances, and enemies. The difference between intimates and non-intimates, for Davis, lies in the presence or absence, and degree of, reciprocated intimate behavior.

Douvan (1977) distinguishes between interpersonal relationships -- "face-to-face relationships between whole persons, they are affectively loaded, particularistic, and nonnormative" -- and role relations -- which "are partial, less affective, universalistic and governed by norms, by shared expectations about the rights and obligations of role occupants" (p. 17).

Lowenthal and her Associates (1975) envision four types of dyadic relationships. Each type is characterized by an increment in knowledge about the unique individuality of the other, and progressively less reliance on roles and stereotypic conceptions. The four types are: acquaintanceship; friendly interaction; friendship; and intimacy. The intimate relationship is the most personal and ideally involves a high degree of closeness, spontaneous interaction, emotional commitment, responsibility and mutuality.

Simmel (1908, 1950) makes an important distinction between intimacy and sociability that has since been utilized by Lewin (1948), Douvan and Adelson (1966) and Booth (1972). In Simmel's view, intimate relationships are built upon the "individual in his totality." Douvan and Adelson (1966) point out the contrast to sociability: "Much of what passes as friendship is cordiality in various forms: people come together through accidents of propinquity, or to enjoy together the more public forms of pleasure. This is sociability and we do well to distinguish it from intimacy" (p. 175). All of these investigators feel that intimacy and sociability are often mistaken and confused. They point out, however, that they see sociability -- and not intimacy -- as characteristic of American modes of friendship (Lewin, 1948 and Douvan & Adelson, 1966) and especially the friendship of boys (Douvan & Adelson, 1966) and men (Booth, 1972).

Kurth (1970) makes a similar distinction in her differentiation between friendly relations and friendships. She points out that empirical research, following the everyday lack of distinction between these two types of relationships, has often confused them. Kurth sees friendships as intimate interpersonal relationships that involve the individual as a total, personal entity. Friendly relations, on the other hand, are an outgrowth of formal role relationships which facilitate role performance, they are a preliminary stage in the development of a friendship, and involve less extensive interactions, more limited obligations, less affective ties and a lower order of intimacy and personal involvement. Kurth points out that, while the stated cultural ideal is friendship formation, it is difficult for these relationships to occur.

In fact, people tend to seek out friendly relations rather than friendships because they provide a pleasant basis of association, facilitate formal role performance, provide some support for the individual's view of himself and do not involve as much cost as friendships.

Two major categories of interpersonal relationships emerge from these theoretical formulations: intimate relationships (Levinger's mutuality, Douvan's interpersonal relationship, Kurth's friendships) and non-intimate relationships (formal relations, role relations, friendly relations and sociability). The major variables that differentiate these two types of relationships are: the degree of formality and structure of the relationship; the balance between internal and external regulation of the relationship; the degree and quality of interaction between the participants; the amount of the individual's totality invested in the relationship; and the affectional bonding between the partners.

This basic theoretical distinction receives empirical support from four research studies (Marwell and Hage, 1970; Triandis, 1972; Triandis, Vassilious, and Nassiakou, 1968; and Wish, Deutsch and Kaplan, 1976). All studied the fundamental dimensions underlying people's perceptions of interpersonal relationships. Wish, et. al. (1976) began with the assumption that dyadic relationships are meaningful perceptual-cognitive units that can be evaluated and compared with one another. They had

respondents rate both typical role relationships, and their own interpersonal relationships (both current and childhood relationships) on 25 bipolar scales. A multidimensional scaling analysis was used and revealed four fundamental perceived dimensions: 1) cooperative and friendly vs. competitive and hostile; 2) equal vs. unequal; 3) intense vs. superficial; and, 4) socioemotional and informal vs. task-oriented and formal. The first pole of each dimension generally connotes intimacy or closeness.

Typical role relations tended to be located at the extremes of these dimensions, while the respondents' own relationships were closer to the center. There was also general agreement among respondents in their evaluation of role relationships, with greater variation when describing their own relationships.

Wish, et. al. (1976) found support for their dimensions from three earlier studies on the perceived dimensions of role relationships. Specifically, Marwell and Hage (1970) found three factors in their study: 1) intimacy -- high vs. low level of interaction; 2) visibility -- public vs. private relationships; and, 3) regulation -- externally defined formal structure vs. internally defined informal structure.

Similarly, Triandis, Cassilious, and Nassiakou (1968), and Triandis (1972), in cross-cultural studies, also found three perceived fundamental dimensions of human social relationships: 1) association -- disassociation; 2) superordination -- subordination; and, 3) intimacy. Wish, et. al. (1976) see a direct correspondence to three of their four dimensions. That is, the Triandis dimensions correspond respectively to the Wish dimensions of cooperative/friendly vs. competitive/hostile; equal vs. unequal; and,

socioemotional/informal vs. task-oriented formal.

Thus, despite small differences, the basic dimensions found in all four studies show a high degree of similarity. Each study points to a distinction between intimate, informal, private, internally structured relationships, and non-intimate, formal, public, externally defined relationships. These dimensions basically correspond to those that emerged from the previous theoretical formulations.

In summary, it would appear that intimate relationships are basically characterized by a high degree of close interaction between partners with strong affectional bonding and a greater totality of the individual involved in a relatively nonstructured, informal and non-normative interpersonal relationship.

SOURCES OF CONFUSION IN THE STUDY OF INTIMACY

We have already seen the diversity of definitions of intimate relationships utilized by social scientists, and the range of relationships which have been characterized as intimate. For example, to Davis (1973) there are four types of intimates: friends, lovers, spouses and siblings; whereas Lowenthal, et al. (1975) differentiate between intimate relationships and friendships. In order to further clarify the nature of intimacy, it is necessary to focus on the sources of these contradictions and confusion.

The contradictions and confusion in the field arise from the inherent complexity of the nature of intimate relationships, as well as from the study of intimacy by social scientists itself. Five specific

sources of confusion in the data to be directly addressed in this chapter are:

1) the multitude of theoretical descriptions and operational definitions of terms and concepts utilized by social scientists in their study of intimacy;

2) a lack of clarity and differentiation in these terms, concepts, definitions and descriptions -- especially regarding the interplay between intimacy, love, and sex;

3) compounding variables (e.g., sex differences, historical and sociocultural context, life span developmental factors, and sexual orientation) that often are not acknowledged, addressed, or controlled;

4) assumptions, biases, and values that are treated as moral and/or social givens rather than as choices among equally valid alternative perspectives; and/or

5) generalizations and comparisons that are made and conclusions that are drawn from varied conceptual perspectives and methodological approaches utilizing different sources and types of data.

In an attempt to further clarify the nature of intimacy and the basic characteristics of intimate relationships, it is necessary at this point first, to clarify and differentiate the variety of terms, definitions, concepts and theoretical descriptions used in the study of intimacy; and second, to explore several of the major conceptual perspectives and/or

methodological approaches utilized by social scientists in their study of intimate relationships.

The assumptions, biases and values that have affected both the participant and observer of intimate relationships will be explored in this chapter. The effects of the most significant compounding variables (historical and sociocultural context; life span developmental factors; and sex role identity issues) on intimate relationships will be examined in later chapters.

Definition Of Terms -- Intimacy And Intimate Relationships

Intimacy has been defined by a wide variety of experiences including behavior, attitudes, emotions, needs, and cognitions. It has been used to describe a wide variety of interpersonal experiences including liking, various forms of love, caring, attachment, infatuation, parenting, and sexual interaction. Finally, it has been used to describe or characterize a wide variety of close interpersonal relationships: kinship; friendship; parent-child relationships; sexual relationships; romantic lover relationships; companionate or marital relationships; and "limerant" relationships. Authors or researchers often bemoan the complexity and confusion, and then proceed to add a new definition or distinction in an attempt to clarify, but instead usually only further add to the confusion.

Few specific definitions of intimacy are offered. Often intimate relationships are described in lieu of defining intimacy. Those definitions that are offered usually focus on different aspects of the concept.

Simmel (1908, 1950) explored dyadic relationships -- love, marriage and friendship -- in which strains toward totality, intimacy and sentimentality were present. In his view, intimacy exists if the individuality of the person is felt to be essential and is shared only with the other member of the dyad and nobody else. The whole affective structure of the dyadic relationship was seen to be based on this exclusive sharing. To Simmel, intimacy was not based on the content of the relationship.

Davis (1973) defines an intimate relation as "an ongoing social interaction between individuals that consists of a large number of intimate behaviors" (p. XVIII). He defines intimate behaviors tautologically as those behaviors which most people in society consider to be intimate behaviors. This is, however, an important point in that it stresses the relativity of intimate behavior and the necessity of understanding the sociocultural context of the intimate behavior. Davis declines to define intimacy, feeling that it is too complex to define succinctly. He differentiates his "four species of the genus intimates" in terms of the kinds of intimate behaviors in which they engage: friends engage in all intimate behaviors except sexual ones; lovers engage in sexually intimate behaviors and may engage in other intimate behavior as well; spouses share a common future of potential intimate behaviors although they may not be currently engaging in many intimate behaviors; and siblings share a common past of intimate behavior, though they too may not be currently engaging in many intimate behaviors.

Morris (1971) states that "the act of intimacy occurs whenever two individuals come into bodily contact" (p. 1). He treats literally the idea that to be intimate means to be close. He sees love as meaning touching and bodily contact. He describes the process of heterosexual

pair-formation in terms of twelve stages from eye-to-body contact (first glimpse) to genital-to-genital contact (copulation).

Sullivan (1953) defines intimacy as a particular kind of interpersonal closeness. "Intimacy is that type of situation involving two people which permits validation of all components of personal worth" (p. 246). He envisions this occuring in a relationship of collaboration in which behavior is adjusted to the other's expressed needs in pursuit of increasingly mutual satisfactions and in the maintenance of increasingly similar security operations.

Clearly, intimacy represents different concepts to different clinicians, researchers and theoreticians. These different ideas can create confusion when people are trying to discuss the same concept or type of relationships. Often relationships that sound remarkably similar to what others define as intimate are labeled by different terms. For example, Levinger (1977), integrating views presented at a symposium on close relationships and perspectives on the meaning of intimacy, defines "interpersonal closeness" as some combination of social, physical, and psychological nearness with at least the following components: "a) frequent interaction, b) between spatially near partners, c) who share significant common goals, d) exchange personal disclosures, and e) care deeply about one another" (p. 138). It is clear that his concept of "interpersonal closeness" is akin to what others call intimacy.

Regarding the differentiation between intimacy and intimate relationships, the review of the social science literature reveals that "intimacy" is most frequently used to refer to a descriptive quality of a close interpersonal interaction or relationship between people. The specific

nature of this descriptive quality is uniquely and differentially defined by each participant and/or observer. "Intimate relationship" is used to refer to "the relationship" between people which is characterized by intimacy. It has been noted that the type of relationship assumed to be intimate varies. However, to most observers there are three types of relationships that are thought to be potentially intimate: 1) kinship; 2) heterosexual couples (romantic and/or marital relationships); and, 3) friendships. The focus in the social science literature on intimacy has been on the latter two types of relationships.

An interesting point emerges about marital relationships. To some observers, marriages are by definition intimate, but to others, intimacy is less characteristic of marital relationships. For example, both Simmel (1908, 1950) and Douvan (1977), writing some seventy years apart, come to similar conclusions regarding the marital relationship. Simmel (1908, 1950) felt that marriage is "superindividual" in that it is socially regulated and historically transmitted. In addition, a love relationship (he seems to equate marital and love relationships) provides a specific concentration upon one element which it derives from its sensuousness. He felt that the entering into the relationship of the person in his totality -- which he sees as necessary for intimacy -- may be more plausible in friendship which allows more play of individual freedom. Douvan (1977) feels that the marital relationship is heavily circumscribed by norms and far along the continuum toward a pure role relationship. She views the same-sex close friendship as the prototype and closest approximation to the ideal interpersonal (i.e., intimate) relationship.

These points seem particularly relevant to intimate relationships between gay men which lack clearcut external norms and reciprocal gender-determined role expectations. This raises several interesting questions which will be addressed more fully in later chapters. Does this mean that intimate relationships between gay men allow more play of individual freedom and more of the individual's totality to enter into the relationship, and thus the possibility of greater intimacy in Simmel's sense? In addition, do intimate relationships between gay men, because of the lack of constraint by culturally imposed norms and roles, more closely approximate Douvan's prototype of the ideal interpersonal relationship -- the same-sex close friendship?

The Interface Between Intimacy and Love

Another source of confusion arises when we consider love and its relationship to intimacy. The literature on love is confusing and contradictory. Often intimacy and love are used interchangeably to refer to the same concept or relationship. At other times, intimacy may be one aspect of a love relationship, and still, at other times, love may be one aspect of an intimate relationship. For example, Kilpatrick (1975), in exploring what happens to "love" as a result of changing concepts of identity, states "Already there is a tendency to talk about 'intimate' relations rather than 'love' relations. And the word 'intimacy' has begun to take on a connotation of lovemaking without love. 'Intimacy,' furthermore, has acquired a connotation of brevity, whereas 'love' implies constancy. Since it is brevity, not constancy, that characterizes so many of today's relationships,

'intimacy' has become the word of choice" (p. 15). It seems, however, that Kilpatrick himself uses love and intimacy interchangeably throughout the course of his text and never adequately addresses their interrelationship. However, he does bring out an important point about the relativity of the concepts of intimacy and love and how their definitions and interrelationship change and are affected by historical and sociocultural conditions.

Most of the writing done by psychologists, psychiatrists, and sociologists on love and love relationships has been done from a theoretical or clinical perspective. Freud (1921), Reik (1943), Belgel (1951), Maslow (1954), Fromm (1956), Goode (1959), Hunt (1959), May (1969), and Kilpatrick (1975), among others, have all examined facets of love and love relationships. Again, there are contradictions and confusions in their analyses. One of the problems has been the various kinds of interpersonal relationships referred to as love relationships and the number of different varieties of love explored. Some examples may prove illuminating.

Freud (1921, 1960) saw libido as the energy of those instincts which have to do with what is called love. The nucleus for love consists of sexual love with sexual union as its aim. When the aim of direct sexual satisfaction is reached -- this is sensual love. But, Freud continues, "We do not separate from this -- what in any case has a share in the name 'love' -- on the one hand, self-love, and on the other, love for parents and children, friendship and love for humanity in general, and also devotion to concrete objects and to abstract ideas" (1960, p. 29). Freud sees these types of love as an expression of the same instinctual impulses as sensual love, but which have been inhibited in or diverted from, their aim. The

sensual nature of the impulse, however, remains preserved in the unconscious. The emotions the individual feels toward these objects of his love are characterized as "affectionate." "Being in love" is described by Freud as the simultaneous presence of directly expressed sexual instinctual impulses, and of sexual impulses which have been inhibited in their aim, thus becoming affectionate feelings toward the love object.

Goode (1959) defines love as a strong emotional attachment between adolescents or adults of opposite sexes, with at least the components of sexual desire and tenderness. In a different light, May (1969) defines love as "a delight in the presence of the other person and an affirming of his value and development as much as one's own" (p. 240).

Maslow (1954) argues that there are two types of love: a) D-love or deficiency love -- where one loves another because of one's "deficiency needs" for acceptance and approval. This is seen as an immature type of love characteristic of non-actualized individuals; b) B-love -- a love for the other's being -- is less needful and dependent and more autonomous and giving. This is a rare and superior type of love characteristic of self-actualized people.

Kilpatrick (1975) distinguishes five types of love: sexual love; Don Juanism; romantic love; Eros; and agape (or mature love). The first four types are need-based loves. The fifth -- mature love or agape -- is similar to Maslow's B-love in that it is care and concern for the other in his wholeness and is less under the control of the emotions and more under the control of will than the need-based types of love. Kilpatrick feels that most love is a combination of these various types of love. He also sees romantic love as an important initial stage in the progression from romantic love to Eros to mature and commited love (agape).

Fromm (1956) sees love as an active power in man to overcome his basic separateness and sense of isolation through union with a person of the opposite sex while preserving one's integrity and individuality. He saw love as "the active concern for the life and growth of that which we love" (p. 22), with giving, care, responsibility, respect and knowledge the basic elements common to all forms of love. Fromm argues that there are various kinds of love which are distinguished by the kind of object which is loved. "Love is not primarily a relationship to a specific person; it is an *attitude*, an *orientation of character* which determines the relatedness of a person to the world as a whole, not toward one "object of love" (p. 38). He distinguishes the following kinds of love: brotherly love; motherly love; erotic love; self-love; and, love of God.

Clearly, there are many conceptions of love which have been applied to various types of relationships. One distinction which emerges from the literature is that between need-based, dependent love -- be it sexual or emotional needs -- and the "mature," giving, altruistic love with the focus on the loved one (Maslow's B-love, May, Fromm). Another distinction involves the role of sexual desire as a component of the love relationship. For some theorists, sexual desire is an essential component of love (Freud, Goode, Fromm's erotic love, Kilpatrick's sexual love), for others, sexual desire is not essential to their definition of love: (Fromm's brotherly love, motherly love, and love of God; Kilpatrick's agape or mature love).

Clearly, one of the problems encountered in the field is the attempt to compare and equate different types of experience without accounting for important qualifying variables. It seems that there are, indeed, many types of "love" relationships.

The variety of interpersonal experiences represented by these relationships is complicated by such factors as the person's age or developmental level, the cultural, subcultural and ethnic context, the socioeconomic class of the partners and the social and historical context of the encounter. Often, it appears, these factors are overlooked in attempts at definition, especially from the theoretical standpoint. For example, the salience of sexual desire in a love relationship may be quite different for two young lovers who are newly exploring their sexuality than it is for two older people who have been in a love relationship for fifty years. This raises another factor often overlooked -- the developmental vector of the relationship itself. Hopefully, love will mean something different to two people who have been together a brief time than it will to these same people after being together twenty-five or more years. So, perhaps the contradictions and confusion result from trying to equate different individual and interpersonal experiences at different historical times, in different sociocultural contexts, between people of varied relationship to one another at different points in the course of their relationship.

The interface between intimacy and love remains vague. Often it seems the terms are used interchangeably to refer to the same psychological and/or interpersonal experience. For example, there is striking similarity between Sullivan's previously noted definition of intimacy and May's, Maslow's (B-love), and Fromm's conceptions of love. However, Sullivan (1953) deals directly with the interplay between intimacy and love, and he differentiates between the two. Sullivan postulates that with the advent of preadolescence the child is faced with a new and powerful need for

intimacy. This is a need for collaboration with a special other person of the same sex -- a chumship. Sullivan seems to say that the need for collaborative intimacy -- or friendship -- is motivated by the powerful experience of loneliness.

Sullivan postulates that "the need for intimacy in its highest manifestations is unquestionably love -- and while love has been many things to many people, the common denominator pertains to interpersonal intimacy" (p. 292). He classified individuals on the basis of the manifestations of the need for intimacy and the precautions that concern it under three rubrics: autophilic, isophilic, and heterophilic. It should be noted that he uses the Greek term "philos" as his suffix -- which means "loving." "The autophilic, isophilic and heterophilic are those persons, respectively, who can manifest in their interpersonal relations the pattern of field forces properly called *love* for no one, for a person of one's own sex, or for persons of one's own and of the other sex" (p. 372). Sullivan is not referring here to sexual behavior which he sees motivated by a separate system -- the lust dynamism. The need for intimacy and the lust dynamism may interact in various combinations. They may conflict or collide or "in the fortunate," with the maturation of the lust dynamism at puberty, they are integrated in a loving relationship with a member of the opposite sex.

Thus, to Sullivan, intimacy is a need or motivational system, for a particular type of close collaborative, interpersonal relationship motivated by loneliness, and love is the highest, most fully developed manifestation of this need for interpersonal intimacy. Most other theoreticians do not directly address the interface between intimacy and love as Sullivan does. However, a review of the literature reveals that "love" is most often used

to refer to a particularly meaningful individual and/or interpersonal psychological experience that occurs within the context of a close interpersonal relationship which is assumed to be intimate. Romantic love relationships are generally assumed to be potentially the most intimate of all relationships. The specific nature of this individual and/or interpersonal experience that is "love" is uniquely and differentially defined by each participant and/or observer.

Empirical Research on Love

The definitions and concepts that have been discussed so far have been based on theoretical speculation and/or clinical observations. Although there are empirical studies that have examined the personality characteristics of those "in love" (Dion & Dion, 1973; Dion & Dion, 1975; Walster, 1965; and, Critelli, 1977), there are few empirical attempts to differentiate various types of love, or love from other interpersonal sentiments. The research of Rubin (1970, 1973, 1974); Guinsburg (1973), and Tennov (1979) will be explored: Rubin attempted to differentiate romantic love from liking; Guinsburg compared platonic and romantic heterosexual relationships; and, Tennov examined "limerant" relationships and differentiates these from affectional bonding and love.

Rubin (1970, 1973, 1974) examined "romantic love" empirically by developing and validating a love scale and a parallel scale of liking. He focused on love between unmarried opposite-sex peers of the sort that could possibly lead to marriage. He developed items for his scale based on his definition of love as "an *attitude* held by a person toward a particular other person, involving predispositions to think, feel, and

behave in certain ways toward that other person" (1970, p. 265). He postulated three basic components of love:

1) attachment -- reflective of the conception of love as physical or emotional needing;
2) caring -- reflective of the contrasting conception of love as giving;
3) intimacy -- the bond or link between the two people manifest by close and confidential communication, both verbal and nonverbal.

To establish the discriminant validity of the love scale, Rubin de-developed a parallel scale of liking which he conceived of as a moderately correlated yet distinct dimension of a person's attitudes toward another. Liking is generally regarded as a more or less undifferentiated positive attitude toward another person. The evaluative component of the attitude, respect, and the perception that the other is similar to oneself are emphasized aspects of liking. The evaluative dimensions usually tapped in measures of liking -- the measure most often used in attraction research -- are usually task-related ones.

Rubin assessed the utility of the parallel self report scales of loving and liking in describing ongoing interpersonal relationships by administering the scales to college age heterosexual dating couples in 1968. Each respondent completed both the scales for his or her dating partner and with respect to a close same-sex friend.

Rubin unexpectedly found that love and liking were more highly correlated among men than among women -- when comparing love and liking scores for the dating partner. Correlations of love and liking scores for same-sex friends are not reported. Rubin suggests that women are more able to

experience and express the two sentiments as distinct, while men are more likely to blur the subtle distinction between the two. He suggests that this is because women learn to develop a more finely tuned and discriminating set of interpersonal attitudes because of their socialization as "socioemotional specialists" as opposed to men who are socialized as "task-specialists."

Rubin also found that both men and women liked their lovers slightly more than they liked their same-sex friends, but that they loved their lovers much more than they loved their same-sex friends. However, he did report that women tended to love their same-sex friends more than men did. He suggests that this may reflect differences between men and women in the nature of their same-sex friendships, with women's friendships being more intimate.

Guinsburg (1973), in his doctoral dissertation, investigated and compared the variables important to "platonic" and "romantic" heterosexual relationships for both men and women. He found that both males and females described the platonic relationship (here a cross-sex friendship) as lacking the emotional closeness and comfort of the romantic relationship. In his other findings sex differences predominate. Females, but not males, saw the romantic relationship as more important to them than the platonic relationship, and they generally expressed more emotional and intellectual involvement in the romantic relationship than did males. In addition, females stressed the importance of their emotional involvement in the romantic relationship, whereas males focused on the various qualities and characteristics of their romantic partners. Finally, females saw the function of platonic relationships as important for communication about personal

problems, whereas males saw platonic relationships as important for casual dating activities -- that is, task oriented.

Here again the finding that women are "socioemotional specialists" and men are "task-specialists" is suggested. It should be stressed that the platonic relationships examined by Guinsburg are heterosexual (i.e., cross-sex) as opposed to the same-sex friendships examined by Rubin. However, differences between men and women in the nature of their friendships and romantic relationships were confirmed, and the sex of the individual was found to be a critical variable for understanding intimate relationships.

Tennov (1979) used questionnaires, interviews, telephone conversations and private diaries to focus on and explore the individual's experience of "being in love" -- for which she coined the term "limerance." This "lovesickness" is experienced by some people repeatedly, by others at times, and never by others. Neither the presence nor the absence of limerance is viewed as pathological by Tennov. She sees limerance, sex and love as separate types of human experience which may exist together, or any of the three may exist without one or both of the others.

Tennov found no difference in the way limerance is experienced on the basis of gender, although there were statistical differences between the sexes -- for example, how frequently limerance occurs, how easily it is stimulated or the tendency of women to tie sex more closely with love than men do. She sees these statistical differences between the sexes as a result of differential sex-role socialization in terms of both relationships and sexuality.

Tennov differentiates between limerant relationships and affectional bonding. The experience of limerance is marked by continuous and unwanted

intrusive thinking, longing for reciprocity, fear of rejection, intensification through adversity, acute sensitivity to, and dependency on, the other's mood, an intense need for exclusivity, an "aching of the heart" when uncertainty is strong and buoyancy and euphoria when reciprocity seems certain. Affectional bonding is an affectional and sexual relationship between two people in the absence of limerance on either person's part. Stability, compatability of interests, mutual preferences in leisure time activities, ability to work together, pleasurable sexual experiences and a degree of contentment are emphasized. Recognizing the importance of the developmental vector in relationships, Tennov notes that some of these affectional bonding relationships began as limerant relationships, while others were marked by the absence of limerance from the beginning.

Tennov also differentiates between homosexuality and homolimerance. She suggests that the desire for a limerant object (LO) of one's own sex -- homolimerance -- rather than sexual attraction to members of one's own sex -- homosexuality -- may be the primary motivation for perhaps the majority of those self-identified as homosexual. She bases this on the finding that while sexual attraction and relationships with opposite sex members is not uncommon among homosexuals, they "can only" be limerant toward same-sex people. However, presenting it in this manner seems to imply an inability to become limerant toward members of the opposite sex. The vignettes she describes as typical of her homolimerant respondents are incredibly sad stories with tragic endings. She offers no vignettes of non-limerant homosexuals for comparison.

CONCEPTUAL PERSPECTIVES AND METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES TO THE STUDY OF INTIMACY

The social science data utilized to clarify the nature of intimacy and the basic characteristics of intimate relationships has been derived from the disciplines of clinical and social psychology, psychiatry and psychoanalysis, and sociology. Theoretical, clinical and/or empirical research perspectives in each of these disciplines are the specific sources of data.

The diversity of conceptual perspectives and methodological approaches utilized by social scientists to study intimacy has been a mixed blessing. On the one hand, this diversity has provided expanded opportunities for increased knowledge about intimate relationships due to: 1) increased attention focused on a wider variety of facets of this multifaceted phenomena; 2) increased availability of varied sources and types of data; and, 3) the sharing and discussion of this varied data in attempts to understand and explain this multidetermined phenomena. On the other hand, this conceptual and methodological diversity has been a major source of contradictions and confusion in the data.

Relevant aspects of several of the theoretical and clinical perspectives have already been explored in attempting to clarify terms, concepts and definitions -- the psychoanalytic perspectives of Sullivan (1953); Freud (1921, 1960); and Fromm (1956); and the sociological perspectives of Simmel (1908, 1950), and David (1973).

It would be helpful to examine several of the other major conceptual and methodological perspectives utilized by psychologists and sociologists to study intimate relationships. Social Exchange Theory, and its offshoots

and derivatives has been the major generator of psychological research on interpersonal relationships. The Symbolic Interactionist Theory is an important source of conceptual data in the study of social relationships. The basic tenents of these theories will be outlined within their historical professional context.

In addition, two recent alternative perspectives offered by Ramey (1976) and Rausch (1977) will be examined. These two conceptual frameworks offer interesting, provocative, creative perspectives which help to clarify the issues regarding intimate relationships.

Social Exchange Theory and Its Predecessors

Serious study of interpersonal attraction began with Moreno's (1934) sociometric method. This was a measure of popularity in groups which required each person to designate some individuals or subsamples with which he or she preferred to associate. Research in the 1930's, '40's and early '50's concentrated on the kinds of personal and social characteristics related to popularity in groups.

Several theories emerged in the 1950's that furthered the exploration of interpersonal relationships. Winch's (1958) Theory of Complimentary Needs focused on the role of personality match in mate selection. Festinger's (1954) Social Comparison Theory focused on people's desire to be with similar, as opposed to dissimilar others. Festinger (1957) also advanced the Cognitive Dissonance Theory which has had wide applicability to understanding individual's evaluation of others. Finally, Heider's (1958) Balance Theory was applied to investigations of the degree to which relations tend toward "symmetry."

During the 1960's and early 1970's Reward Theory emerged as the most predominant generator of research on interpersonal relationships. Reward Theory has two basic variations based on two predominant learning theory paradigms. The basic thesis of these theories is that people develop positive interpersonal attitudes (liking) towards others who reward them. Byrne and his colleagues (1971, 1973) utilized a classical conditioning paradigm in their reinforcement-affect model of attraction. They used this paradigm to account for findings that persons are positively attracted to strangers having similar attitudes. Lott and Lott (1968, 1972) utilized the Hull-Spence (or Yale-Iowa) approach to learning interpersonal attitudes. They postulate that a primary antecedant for the development of positive interpersonal attitudes (liking) toward a person is the receipt of reward -- interpreted in drive reduction terms -- in the person's presence. Liking as a positive interpersonal attitude is seen as an anticipatory goal response and a liked person is seen to be a secondary reinforcer. These learning/reward theorists basically focused on the initial development of positive interpersonal attitudes (liking or initial attraction) between strangers in single encounter situations.

A derivative of Reward Theory -- Social Exchange Theory in its many forms (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959; Homans, 1961, 1974; Blau, 1964; Levinger, 1974; Levinger and Snoek, 1972; Douvan, 1977; Burgess & Huston, 1979; Scanzoni, 1979; Murstein, 1971; Altman & Taylor, 1973; Walker & Wright, 1976; and Levinger & Raush, 1977) -- has been perhaps the largest source of empirical research on interpersonal relationships. They expanded the focus of research from the earlier specific emphasis on the antecedants, consequences and correlates of initial interpersonal attraction to an emphasis

on the development of close interpersonal relationships over time. They focused on the relationship itself as the unit of analysis.

Exchange theorists posit that social interactions are regulated by the participants' desire to maximize pleasure and minimize pain. Individuals are most attracted to others who provide the highest ratio of rewards to costs. Relationships begin, grow, develop, deteriorate and dissolve as a consequence of an unfolding process of a bartering of rewards and costs, both between partners and between members of the partnership and others. People join together only insofar as they believe and do indeed find it in their mutual interest to do so.

Levinger (Levinger & Snoek, 1972; Levinger 1974; and Levinger 1977) developed his previously discussed conceptual scheme of the three levels of human relatedness within the Social Exchange Theory framework. It is with Levinger's third level of relatedness -- mutuality -- that we are concerned here. According to Social Exchange theorists, the most salient characteristics of close, mutually intimate relationships is high interdependency (or mutual dependency). Thibaut and Kelly (1959) report that "Partners are interdependent to the extent to which each one's outcomes ('returns') depend on the outcomes received by the partner, and to the degree to which each one's profits exceed customary profits or those likely in another relationship" (Burgess & Huston, 1979, p. 13).

Burgess & Huston (1979) have integrated the work of several Exchange theorists with their own ideas to describe the changes that occur in the relationship as the partners grow increasingly intimate:

"1) They interact more often, for longer periods of time, and in a widening array of settings.

2) They attempt to restore proximity when separated, and feel comforted when proximity is regained.
3) They 'open up' to each other, in the sense that they disclose secrets and share physical intimacies.
4) They become less inhibited, more willing to share positive and negative feelings, and to praise and criticize each other.
5) They develop their own communication system, and become more efficient in using it.
6) They increase their ability to map and anticipate each other's views of social reality.
7) They begin to synchronize their goals and behavior, and develop stable interaction patterns.
8) They increase their investment in the relationship, thus enhancing its importance in their life space.
9) They begin increasingly to feel that their separate interests are inextricably tied to the well being of their relationship.
10) They increase their liking, trust, and love for each other.
11) They see their relationship as irreplacable, or at least as unique.
12) They more and more relate to others as a couple rather than as individuals" (p. 8).

Burgess & Huston acknowledge that their list is not exhaustive and that no one really knows which elements are essential for interdependency. Nor can the extent and nature of interdependency be directly measured. They realize that all relationships do not change in the same ways, as each couple shapes their relationship according to their own concepts of intimacy.

Exchange theorists view love as interpersonally based -- the product of a long history of interaction. They assume that caring, affection, trust, and dependency are components of love and are part of the couple's mutual involvement with each other. The research of Social Exchange theorists has focused on heterosexual romantic relationships -- either on premarital couples whose courtship progress has been studied; or on married couples whose relationship at various points in the relationship/life cycle have been examined. Longitudinal studies of changes in the same relationships over time are rare.

Wright (1969) applied Social Exchange principles to the study of same-sex "friendships." He developed the Acquaintance Description Form (ADF) -- a person perception questionnaire used to measure six components of friendship including the strength of the friendship, the ease or difficulty in maintaining the friendship, and the perceived benefits of the friendship. Walker & Wright (1976) studied the differences in friendship levels produced by varying levels of intimacy of self-disclosure. They used the level of friendship as measured by the ADF as the dependent variable. They found that the level of friendship, or degree of liking, between acquaintances increased as the level of intimacy of self-disclosure increased. It is important to note that these researchers examined the level of "friendship" after each of two laboratory exercises, one week apart. They are not exploring intimate same-sex friendships but rather same-sex friendship formation.

Walker & Wright (1976) also reported the same gender difference reported by other researchers -- female "friendships" were more strongly affected by intimate self-disclosure than male "friendships." In fact, the most significant finding of their study was that 50% of the male dyads in the intimate

self-disclosure condition refused to follow instructions to talk about intimate topics and had to be discarded. The authors note this as "an interesting aside," and suggest that "some men find it uncomfortable and difficult to talk about and listen to intimate self-disclosure at least in the early stages of forming an acquaintance" (p. 740). They hypothesize that some men are threatened by intimate self-disclosure while others find it rewarding. They suggest the need for further research to clarify this relationship.

The Symbolic Interactionist Framework

Another major theoretical perspective that has been used to examine close interpersonal relationships is the Symbolic Interactionist framework -- based on the work of G. H. Mead (1934), expanded by McCall (1966, 1970, 1974) to study interpersonal attraction and expounded by Kimmel (1974, 1979) from a life-span developmental perspective. Mead saw man as a social being who has evolved the capacity to interact with others through the use of shared symbols. He saw one of the basic functions of this social interaction to be the creation and development of the self. The child develops a self by taking the attitude of significant others toward oneself. As one grows one is able to take the attitude of several others at once. With the advent of formal operations, one is able to take the attitude of the generalized other toward oneself, and in adulthood one is able to take the attitude of other individuals toward the abstract characteristics of the social order and direct one's behavior accordingly. Mead conceived of the self as process with two distinct aspects -- the I and the me. The me is the objectified social self developed through symbolic interaction with others; the I --

the experiencing self -- is everchanging moment-to-moment consciousness, existing only in process. The self consists of moment-by-moment interaction between the I and me aspects of the self. Thus, for Mead, social relations are central to the development of the core of personality -- the self.

McCall (1966, 1970, 1974) expanded the Symbolic-Interactionist framework initially to study interpersonal attraction. He and his colleagues have since expanded their conceptual framework to examine interpersonal relationships more broadly. McCall (1970) identifies seven important dimensions for locating and comparing social relationships:

1) intimacy -- the depth and breadth of the self-involvement of the members in the relationship;
2) duration -- time or number of encounters;
3) formality -- the degree to which the relationship is structured by role relationships between the members;
4) embeddedness -- the degree to which the relationship is located within some larger type of organization, e.g., the family, school or workplace;
5) actuality of the relationship -- the degree of manifestation in concrete encounters as opposed to its remaining on a symbolic plane only;
6) reciprocality -- the degree to which both members symbolize the existence of substantial probability of recurring interaction between them; and
7) differentiation -- the degree to which members are distinguished from one another within such internal structures as power, status, affect, etc.

McCall views social relationships as the smallest of enduring social organizations. He examines relationships in terms of principles of

organizational dynamics by exploring the relationship's substance (i.e., the bonds uniting the persons in a relationship), structure; shape; and its unique emergent culture. In terms of substance, McCall (1970) lists five interpersonal bonds which lead one person to engage in an enduring social relationship with another person:

1) ascription: linkage owing simply to the social -- or role -- positions these two persons happen to occupy. It is independent of any individual characteristics of the persons;
2) commitment: the fact of having publicly and privately pledged oneself to honoring an exchange agreement with the other;
3) investment: the fact of having expended scarce, personal resources in establishing and maintaining the relationship;
4) reward dependability: the knowledge that the other is a dependable source of various social rewards;
5) attachment: the incorporation of the other's actions and reactions into the contents of one's own conceptions of the self (p. 6-10).

McCall identifies ascription as the primary bond in formal relationships and attachment as the primary bond in personal relationships. Reward dependability, investment and commitment operate equally in both formal and personal relationships, although as these bonds increase in strength and lead to further interaction, bonds of attachment usually form and move the formal to a personal relationship. These bonds usually occur together in most enduring, personal relationships and are present in different proportions in different relationships.

Kimmel (1979) examined Social-Exchange Theory from a developmental

perspective and found three major drawbacks. First, he sees that the social-exchange model implies a static conception of general man functioning as an economic computer -- a white middle class male American 20-45 years of age. This contrasts with the developmental model of the person who manifests both change and continuity over time. Second, he sees an implicit assumption of justice in the social-exchange framework. Kimmel feels that the concept of justice in relationships becomes irrelevant, especially for older adults, whose task is to find a few rewards despite the costs. The third drawback is that the developmental context of the participants is not explicitly considered. He suggests that reinforcement values and perhaps the processes of attending to, and comparing reinforcement values may change with age.

Kimmel finds that the symbolic interactionist approach provides a framework for understanding enduring relationships that is more consonant with his life-span developmental approach. It allows for the developmental changes, both over the individual's life-span and over the course of enduring relationships to be included in the analysis. Kimmel suggests that cognitive developmental level, ego development, moral development, sex differences, sociocultural differences, and life style differences interact with age differences in relationship initiation and development. He explores the chumships of preadolescence, the transitional relationships of adolescence and the intimate, intergenerational, and confidant relationships of adulthood and old age. He points out how the nature of enduring relationships changes over the life cycle based on the needs of that particular stage of life.

Raush's Dialectic Process Orientation

In an attempt to clarify the confusion in the study of intimate relationships, Raush (1977) offers an interesting conceptual perspective. He suggests three "orientations to experience" in intimate relationships. These are contexts through which observers as well as participants view their own and others' intimate experiences. The three orientations are: 1) the personal -- the focus is on the individual, psychological conception and experience of intimacy; 2) the societal -- the focus is on the socio-cultural context from which intimate experiences are viewed and judged, and on the social demands of intimacy as determined by the social order; and, 3) the interpersonal -- the focus is on the intimate dyad as a unit, an "intimate we" that transmutes the self.

Viewing the intimate relationship as process rather than as state, Raush believes that it is best understood as "a temporal and developmental process that derives from homeostatic balances in dialectics among alternative orientations and between internalization and externalization" (p. 169). Raush suggests that, in observing or participating in an intimate relationship, the individual is engaged in a dialectic process among the three orientations outlined above, simultaneously with a second dialectic process concerning balances between the forces of internalization and externalization. The dialectic alignment of the orientations and shifts in the balance between them are seen to be a function of historical and cultural circumstances, developmental changes over the life course of the individual, and the developmental vector of the specific relationship. Although at times, the three orientations coalesce, disjunctions among them are much more common.

The process of "how" these three orientations to experience change concerns the dialectic balance between the processes of internalization (i.e., something initially "not me" becomes part of "me" and the objective thus becomes subjective) and externalization (i.e., something initially seen as part of "me" becomes "not me" and the subjective thus becomes objective). Periods of congruence between the three orientations -- either within or between partners -- favor internalization which is the medium for continuity; periods of disjunction between the three orientations favor externalization which is the medium for change. Thus the intimate relationship is viewed by Raush as a powerful medium for both individual and social continuity and change.

In his essay Rausch chose to focus on the question of the interplay between internal (personal) and external (social) constraints on the formation and maintenance of intimate relationships. He examines the process of internalization and externalization in terms of forces for both continuity and change in intimate relationships, and he explores the effects and consequences of the congruence and/or disjunctions among the three orientations as they affect the social meaning and parameters of intimacy and as factors which may favor or oppose the formation, development and maintenance of intimate relationships at any and specific points in time.

Raush's perspective offers an interesting conceptual approach to intimate relationships. His conception of the intimate relationship as a multileveled, multidetermined ongoing dialectic process, rather than as state, affords the observer the opportunity to view both continuity and change over time. Raush's perspective addresses developmental changes in the individual over his life course of relationships; the development and

change over the course of a particular relationship; as well as the historical and sociocultural changes in the conception of intimate relationships over time.

Raush chooses to view the interpersonal orientation from the perspective of the intimate dyad -- especially the dyadic relationship with a strong sexual component. He seems to assume the dyadic face-to-face group as the basic unit of analysis for intimate relationships. However, it must be said that while Raush focuses on the dyad, his interpersonal orientation could accommodate multiple primary relationships as well. This issue is addressed more directly by Ramey (1976).

Ramey's Concept of Intimate Friendships

A decidedly different approach to intimate relationships, seemingly free from traditional biases, is offered by Ramey (1976). Ramey examines intimate relationships from an individual, rather than couple-front or familial, perspective. He looks at intimate relationships within the framework provided by the pluralistic model which recognizes more than one type of lifestyle as viable and acceptable. His is a "change model" which views change and conflict, rather than equilibrium, as the constant in society. Ramey's basic intepersonal construct is the "intimate friendship" which he defines as "any and all of the various kind of relationships, primary or not (including monogamous marriage), that involve some degree of social, emotional, sexual, intellectual, family or career intimacy, wherein interaction between persons is more important than, but may include, sexual relations" (p. IX).

In regard to establishing intimate friendships, Ramey believes that the individual has three basic choices: the first choice is to not establish intimate friendships with others; the second choice is to establish any or all variety of intimate friendships, but no primary relationships; and the third choice involves the decision to enter into primary relationships, either a monogamous primary relationship, or a combination of intimate friendships simultaneously with one or more primary relationships. The establishment of a primary relationship depends upon the participants' willingness to accept "unlimited liability" for their partner.

Ramey suggests that there are varying degrees of intimacy in different relationships with respect to six components of intimacy: intellectual, emotional, sexual, social, family and work. The degree of commitment to a relationship depends on the sharing and caring involved in the relationship. For Ramey, love involves active concern for the partner that transcends one's own needs -- a desire to meet the needs of the partner(s) before having one's own needs met. It (love) is operative in all intimate friendships, but is stronger in primary relationships. It is also expected that those in a primary relationship will give that relationship their primary loyalty by protecting the time and psychic space of the primary relationship vis-a-vis other relationships.

Ramey also distinguishes between pair bonds and peer bonds. Pair bonds are generally traditional dominant-submissive relationships best represented by traditional, role bound, monogamous heterosexual marriage. Peer bonds, on the other hand, are relationships of equals which are process, rather than content, oriented. They exist to permit and foster the growth of the partners and of the relationship between them. Each partner assumes responsibility

and control of his self-growth, and for maintaining the peer bond. The peer relationship exists only as long as each partner feels that there is more to be gained by staying in the relationship than by ending it. Fidelity is defined as loyalty to the peer relationship -- its particular structure, norms, and purpose -- rather than as sexual exclusivity.

Ramey points out the strong pressure of socialization, in our culture, towards forming a couple relationship. He stresses the effort it requires to overcome this socialization to be part of a couple and the pressure encountered for conformity to this couple-front orientation in social institutions. He points out that most people do indeed form dyadic primary relationships, at least for short periods of time, over the course of their lifetime. The majority of these dyads are heterosexual. Ramey stresses, however, that intimate friendships may be homosexual, heterosexual, or bisexual -- in the case of group marriages, triads, or intimate friendship networks. Ramey stresses that it is the acceptance of the legitimacy of the potential for sexual intimacy, and not actual sexual activity, that is important in defining intimate friendships.

Ramey's conceptual framework offers an interesting, creative, alternative perspective, free from traditional biases, from which to view intimate relationships. However, his concept of intimacy and its six components is vague and needs clarifaction. His inclusion of work intimacy is important because it recognizes the importance of relationships established with co-workers to the individual. Although free from traditional biases, Ramey does seem to have his own bias in that he clearly favors peer bonds over traditional pair bonds. He also seems to encourage the establishment of primary relationships. However, refreshingly, he does not seem to be judgmental about their absence.

SUMMARY, OVERVIEW, AND CRITIQUE

In an attempt to point out the sources of contradictions and confusion in the data, it has been necessary to explore several of the varied conceptual perspectives and methodological approaches that have been utilized in the study of intimate relationships. It is also necessary to identify and examine the methodological and conceptual issues and/or variables that affect the observer and his observations, and thus compound and complicate the study of intimacy.

Methodological Issues

Each observer works within a specific historical and sociocultural context as well as within a specific professional Zeitgeist. These factors, in addition to his own intimate experiences, affect the observer's conceptions, assumptions, biases, theoretical perspectives, methods of observation, as well as the units and levels of data observed and analyzed. Contradictions and confusion in the data result from attempting to equate, compare, and draw conclusions from data: 1) gathered by observers with different personal, professional, conceptual and methodological perspectives; 2) obtained by different methods from varied sources, and 3) analyzed in different ways.

There are several issues of research methodology, specific to the study of intimacy, that are sources of confusion in the data. Some observers focus on broad perspectives, while others focus on specific issues. Different types of relationships have been evaluated and compared at different points in the course of the relationship. Some relationships are examined at only one point in time. At other times, different relationships are evaluated and compared at differing points in the life course of the relationship to offer

a "developmental" perspective. However, longitudinal studies of changes in the same relationship over time are rare. Typically, conclusions have been drawn and generalizations have been made from data derived from three repeatedly utilized subject populations: strangers; college students; or heterosexual dating or married couples. Clearly, the complexity and relativity of the experience and meaning of intimacy is not well served by limiting observations to expedient subject populations.

Different observers utilize different units or levels of analysis in their work. The three levels of analysis most commonly examined by observers have been: 1) the sociocultural parameters of intimacy; 2) the individual's phenomenological world of intimacy; and, 3) the interpersonal relationship between the partners. Confusion results when observers focus on one of these levels either predominantly or exclusively without at least the recognition of the essential connection between all three of these levels of analysis. As Raush (1977) points out, an understanding of all three levels is necessary for a full understanding of intimacy at any point in time.

Another major source of contradictions and confusion in the data results when those variables known to compound both the participant's and observer's experience of intimate relationships are not acknowledged, addressed or controlled by the observer in his work. The most outstanding of these variable is gender. The strongest, most consistent differences in the conception and experience of intimacy occur between men and women. Men are repeatedly found to have less training for, and experience with intimacy, and are therefore less emotionally involved in intimate relationships than women. These differences are thought to be due to innate differences and/or differential sex-role socialization.

Three other variables emerge as important to understanding intimacy and the nature of intimate relationships: 1) the historical context of the relationship; 2) the sociocultural and subcultural context of the individual; and, 3) developmental variables -- both individual life-span developmental factors and the developmental vector of the particular relationship. How these four variables affect the individual's conception and experience of intimacy and the nature of his intimate relationships will be explored in depth in the following chapters.

It is to be expected that socioeconomic status, ethnic background, religious background, and social, occupational, and geographical mobility would also likely affect the individual's conception and experience of intimacy, and the nature of intimate relationships between people.

Contradictions and confusion in the data result when observers, using different data and methods, attempt to compare, equate, and draw conclusions from different individual and interpersonal experiences between people of varied relationship to one another, in different sociocultural contexts, at different points in history, in their lives, and in the course of their relationships.

Olson (1977) directly addresses the issue of research methodology in the study of intimate relationships. He differentiates two research perspectives which have been utilized in the study of intimate relationships: the insider perspective -- a member of the relationship provides data on the individual's "subjective reality" of the relationship, typically utilizing self-report measures; the outsider perspective -- an observer outside of the relationship provides data about the "objective reality" of the relationship, typically utilizing the direct behavioral observation method.

Olson believes that these two research perspectives are mutually exclusive frames of reference, both of which are necessary but neither of which is sufficient alone for understanding intimate relationships. He points out that researchers have tended to utilize only one of these research perspectives in their work. Olson believes that only by the use of both of these perspectives can a more comprehensive, valid theory of intimate relationships emerge: "The development of theoretical ideas about intimate relationships demands that we pay attention to both subjective and objective realities" (p. 116).

Olson suggests the use of two other research methods to gain a broader understanding of intimacy: the behavioral self-report can provide objective data from the insider perspective; and the observer subjective report can provide subjective data from the outsider perspective -- e.g., therapists making clinical assessments. Olson recommends combining several research methods to increase methodological rigor and validity. He suggests using multitrait, multimethod studies to explore intimate relationships in order to provide a more comprehensive understanding of such a complex issue.

Conceptual Issues

Observers' conceptual perspectives naturally affect their methodological approach to their data. The multitude of conceptual perspectives utilized by social scientists in the study of intimate relationships has resulted in several specific sources of confusion in the data.

A particularly important source of confusion results from the lack of clarity in the distinction between intimacy and intimate relationships. The literature reveals that "intimacy" is used to refer to either an individual, psychological construct (e.g., Morris' act of intimacy;

Sullivan's need for intimacy) or, more usually, to a descriptive quality of a close interpersonal relationship or interaction between people; "intimate relationship" is used to refer to "the relationship" between the people which is characterized by "intimacy." Few specific definitions of intimacy are offered; usually intimate relationships are described in lieu of defining intimacy. Those definitions that are offered generally focus on different aspects of the concept.

A major source of confusion in the data results from the fact that the nature of intimacy and intimate relationships have been theoretically and operationally defined and described in a multitude of ways. A wide variety of individual experiences have been used to define intimacy including behavior, attitudes, emotions, needs, and cognitions. A wide variety of interpersonal experiences have been described as intimate including: various forms of love; liking; caring; attachment; infatuation; parenting; and, sexual interaction. Finally, a wide variety of close interpersonal relationships have been characterized as intimate including: kinship; parent-child relationships; friendships; sexual relationships; romantic/lover relationships; limerant relationships; and, companionate or marital relationships.

Another major source of confusion in the data arises in the interplay between intimacy, love, and sex. The interface between intimacy and love remains vague and is especially problematic in the literature. Basically, the confusion seems to result from a lack of clarity in terms and definitions. Like intimacy, love has been defined by a wide variety of individual psychological experiences, has been used to describe a wide variety of interpersonal experiences, and has been used to characterize a wide variety of close interpersonal relationships. Often, intimacy and love have been used interchangeably to refer to the same individual and/or interpersonal experi-

ence or relationship -- for example, Sullivan's definition of intimacy is very similar to May's, Maslow's (B-love) and Fromm's conception of love.

However, a review of the literature reveals that "love" is most often used to refer to a particularly meaningful individual and/or interpersonal psychological experience which occurs within the context of a close interpersonal relationship which is assumed to be intimate. The term "love" is most frequently used when discussing "romantic love" which occurs in the context of the intimate relationship most frequently described as a "love relationship" -- the lover, romantic or limerant relationship. Love relationships are assumed to be intimate, and lover relationships are generally assumed to be potentially the most intimate of all relationships. It must be stressed that the specific nature of this individual and/or interpersonal experience that is "love" is uniquely and differentially defined by each participant and/or observer.

In the interplay between intimacy, love, and sex, the confusion is compounded by the observer's assumptions, biases, and values. These are often treated as moral or social givens, rather than as choices among equally valid, alternative perspectives. They are seen as unquestionable, and thus, often remain inarticulated. They cause confusion in the data because: 1) the phenomenological meaning and implications of these assumptions are different for each observer, but universality of meaning is often assumed and the observer's specific assumptions usually remain vague or inarticulated; 2) they are often reflective of traditional cultural ideals and not of current social reality; 3) they act as blinders for the observer, and thus help obscure the meaning of differences; and, 4) the assumptions are often unwarranted, and simply invalid.

It is important to point out that these assumptions, biases and values are reflective of both the professional Zeitgeist and of the traditional values and ideals of the dominant culture within which the profession is embedded. As such, it is important to see the observer as both a participant in intimate relationships as well as an observer of these relationships. The traditional values of the dominant culture must affect the observer's personal value system, his conception of intimacy, as well as his theoretical and methodological approach to the study of intimacy and to his data. However, it often seems impossible, from this position as participant and observer, to gain distance from certain well ingrained, culturally encouraged values which are taken to be reflective of the "natural order of things," and to realize that they may indeed be biases. It is precisely because these assumptions, biases, and values necessarily affect the observer's work and conclusions, lead to confusing data, and work against creative solutions to complex interpersonal problems -- by operating to limit "sanctioned" options and to perpetuate restrictive traditional values -- that they must be recognized, not as unquestionable givens, but as assumptions and biases that must be examined.

These biases and assumptions are most evident in the interface between intimacy, love, and sex. The basic, underlying essential of this pervasive value system is that romantic love and sex are assumed to be valid options only for opposite-sex couples. This value system is reflective of four interconnected biases pervasive in American culture: 1) a couple-front bias; 2) a traditionalist perspective from which the couple is viewed; 3) a heterosexual bias; and, 4) a biased, rigid distinction between friends and lovers. While these four biases have been highly connected in our culture, it is not necessary that this be the case. They are, in fact, separate issues -- for

example, one may maintain a couple-front bias within the context of a non-traditional perspective.

The couple-front bias reflects the expectation and assumption that, in our society, people will interact as couples and present themselves as a dyadic "unit" to the world. Couples (or dyads) are assumed to be the basic component of both intimate and romantic relationships. In our culture, single people have been regarded as lower in status than the "coupled" individual. Our laws and customs have been geared to the heterosexual couple, resulting in discrimination against single people. Of all of the social science observers whose work has been examined here, it seems that only Ramey (1976) focuses on the individual rather than on the couple. The possibility of the individual adult entering into concurrent multiple primary relationships, such as triads, group marriages, complex living groups, or extended intimate friendship networks, is almost never considered by the other observers, who assume the intimate relationship to be dyadic. Ramey is part of a small minority of social science observers who have explored alternative lifestyles including sexually-open dyadic relationships (especially open marriages, O'Neill and O'Neill, 1972 and Knapp and Whitehurst, 1978), and multilateral relationships (including triadic relationships and group marriages, Constantine and Constantine, 1973).

The traditional perspective from which the couple has been viewed is akin to Raush's (1977) notion of the societal orientation to intimate relationships. It refers to the pervasive cultural ideals and expectations against which actual intimate relationships are viewed and judged. This perspective is relative. It changes over time and is somewhat different among cultural subgroups. However, the great majority of social science data presented here were gathered when the beliefs labeled as the traditionalist perspective were

viewed as reflective of the "natural order of things" and as unquestionable sociocultural, and indeed, moral givens.

The basic outlines of the traditionalist view of intimate relationships revolved around two central notions: 1) romantic love and sex were the exclusive domain of the heterosexual dyad; 2) the creation of a nuclear family through marriage and parenthood were viewed as moral imperatives for the individual.

The current societal orientation to intimate relationships is marked by confusion. The values and ideals of the traditionalist perspective are being questioned, and their relevance to current individual needs are being reevaluated. The social reality of alternative lifestyles is becoming increasingly clear. The acceptance of the validity and values of choosing and/or creating alternative lifestyles to meet unique individual needs is, however, slow. As a consequence, the social parameters of intimate relationships are changing, confused, and unclear. However, the beliefs, values, and ideals presented here as the traditionalist perspective seem to be part of an underlying pervasive American value system, derived from our Judeo-Christian heritage, which is still operative on the cultural-ideal level, even though it is not reflective of current social reality, which is much more diverse. It is with this understanding and within this context that the basic parameters of the traditionalist view of intimate romantic and sexual dyadic interaction are presented. The historical factors underlying the traditionalist perspective, and recent changes in the social parameters of intimate relationships will be discussed in depth in a later chapter.

In the traditionalist view of intimate dyadic relationships, heterosexual romance was viewed as the basis for marriage. Sex, romance, and

marriage were tied together. Sex was legitimized in the marital relationship and, ideally, confined to it. Married couples were expected to be sexually exclusive. Fidelity, or faithfulness was defined as sexual fidelity to one's marriage partner, rather than as fidelity to the relationship. The marital relationship was the most culturally valued, sought after intimate relationship. It was viewed as the center for meeting one's intimate needs for both men and women. Thus, people spent a lot of their energy searching for "the right one." Marital relationships were generally based on sexist principles with the male dominant over "his wife" in a traditional dominant/submissive relationship. Ramey (1976) characterizes this relationship as the "pair-bond" and contrasts it with the more egalitarian "peer-bond."

The marital couple was expected to be future oriented and to strive toward permanence, or at least long-term commitment, in their relationship -- indeed, "till death do us part" was included in the marriage vow. The length of the relationship was viewed as a criteria for the success of the relationship. Divorce was regarded as a sign of personal and/or interpersonal failure.

The married heterosexual dyad and, by extension, the nuclear family was viewed as the basic building block of society. The married couple was expected to strive to establish a nuclear family through the parenting and raising of children. The ideal nuclear family was viewed as consisting of a working father -- the head of the family -- a housewife mother, and children. Failure to have children was seen as a source of personal inadequacy, shame, anxiety, and a reson for pity by others. The nuclear family was regarded as a major vehicle for the socialization of the child, and thus as a major source of sociocultural stability and continuity.

A third major component of this pervasive value system is a heterosexual bias. This is meant in two ways. First, people are assumed a priori to be

heterosexual. Second, as defined by Morin (1977), heterosexual bias is "a belief system that values heterosexuality as superior to and/or more 'natural' than homosexuality" (p. 629). A clear heterosexual bias is evident in the social science literature on intimacy, love, and sex.

Heterosexual bias in the first sense -- an assumption of heterosexuality -- is clearest in the psychological research on intimacy. While, in fact, statistics indicate that as much as 10% of any population may be homosexual, researchers usually fail to ascertain the sexual orientation of their subjects and, indeed, assume the subject's heterosexuality -- if they give any thought to the issue at all. However, sexual orientation may indeed have an effect on research results. The same-sex and the opposite-sex intimate needs of gay men are different than those of heterosexual men. These differences could easily -- and probably repeatedly have -- compound research results. Failure to address these differences can only serve to mask significant differences in the data and lead to confusion.

Both aspects of heterosexual bias are particularly evident when discussing romantic and/or sexually intimate relationships. It is generally assumed that couples involved in a romantic and/or sexually intimate relationship are heterosexual -- Ramey, Kimmel, Tennov and Kilpatrick are welcomed exceptions. Certainly it is generally assumed that romantic love and sex are not even valid potential options between men. When homosexual love or sex is discussed by theoreticians or clinicians, it has often been assumed and judged to be deviant, indicative of psychopathology, less natural, and psychologically less healthy than heterosexual romance and sex. Some observers even define love in terms of an opposite-sex dyadic relationship: Goode (1959), Rubin (1970, 1973, 1974), and Fromm (1956) are examples. Fromm (1956) postulates that man's deepest need is to overcome his sense of isolation and his separateness through union with another, while preserving his integrity and individuality.

He defines this as love. He explains that "sexual polarization leads man to seek union in a specific way, that of union with the other sex." He continues "the homosexual deviation is a failure to attain this polarized union, and thus the homosexual suffers from the pain of the never-resolved separateness, a failure, however, which he shares with the average heterosexual who cannot love" (p. 28). Clearly, to Fromm, love is defined by a heterosexual union and limited by definition to heterosexuals -- albeit, not all of them. The homosexual, to Fromm, fails to attain his deepest need of union, remains separate and isolated, consequently suffers pain, and is equated by definition with heterosexuals who cannot love.

The importance of the effects of the heterosexual bias, within our culture, and within the social sciences in particular, cannot be stressed enough. It is imperative that this heterosexual bias, rather than being seen as a moral given reflective of the natural order of things, be seen instead as a pervasive bias that limits options, is restrictive of intimacy for all people, and is a major source of pain and confusion for those people, both homosexual and heterosexual, who are struggling to understand their same-sex relationships.

Same-sex intimates are restricted in their relationships and are not "allowed" the romance, affection, and sexual intimacy culturally "allowed" to opposite-sex intimates. This heterosexual bias is particularly injurous to men who desire intimacy, sex, affection, and romance from other men. Imagine the pain, confusion, conflicts, anxiety, guilt, shame, battered self-esteem, compartmentalization and denial of self engendered by this bias when the individual's felt needs and desired behaviors are the subject of "moral," religious, psychiatric, legal, and even criminal condemnation and penalties.

The effects of the psychiatric and psychoanalytic professional communities on popular thinking and social policy have become considerable over the course of this century. The heterosexual bias of theoreticians and/or clinicians in both of these professional communities has been responsible for promoting pain, conflict, and confusion for the people they were supposedly trying to understand and help through their efforts to create etiological theories, psychodynamic explanations, diagnostic tools and "cures" for homosexuality. A term borrowed from medicine and adapted to social psychological action research by Bard (1971)[3] describes this process well -- iatrogenic. "The term refers simply to a disorder resulting from the actions of the physician during his ministrations. In other words, the very actions undertaken to relieve one disorder may in themselves create still further disorder" (p. 16). This was certainly true of the psychiatric profession regarding their work with gay men prior to the revision of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual II of The American Psychiatric Association (DSM II) on December 15, 1973.[4] It clearly remains true today of many professionals trained under, and/or still adhering to, old conceptions and values. The iatrogenic injury perpetuated by the psychiatric and psychoanalytic communities on gay men will be discussed more fully in the discussion of the role of psychiatry in equating homosexuality and sex-role inversion.

The fourth bias prevalent in the literature is reflective of a rigid distinction between romantic relationships and friendships in our society. Both types of relationships are viewed as potentially intimate, but romantic love and sex are not viewed as valid options for friends. Both theoretically and statistically, friendship has generally been defined as a same-sex relationship based predominantly on liking (i.e., an undifferentiated positive attitude toward the other), and assumed to be non-romantic and non-sexual. Indeed,

friendships are often called platonic -- taken to mean nonsexual. Romantic or lover relationships have been defined as heterosexual, based on love, and assumed to be sexual.

It is important to stress the special value placed on heterosexual romantic relationships in our culture. It is the most culturally valued, desired, and sought after intimate relationship. People spend a lot of energy searching for "the right one" with whom to spend their life. It is the relationship around which people center their lives. It is viewed as a source of security for the individual, as potentially the most intimate of all relationships and, for men especially, has been the center for meeting most of the individual's intimate needs. For a long time marriage was viewed as the only legitimate, moral sexual outlet for the individual. Given its emphasis by the culture and the consequent importance for the individual, it is understandable that it is also the relationship which produces the most vulnerability for the individual and, therefore, has the greatest potential for conflict of all relationships as well.

Two empirical research studies focused on comparing romantic relationships and friendships. The results of these studies are difficult to compare because, while both compared friendship with opposite-sex romantic relationships, Rubin (1970, 1973, 1974) focused on same-sex friendships and Guinsburg (1973) focused on opposite-sex friendships.

Despite the difficulty in making comparisons, two findings stand out from each of these studies. First, the high value placed on heterosexual romantic relationships is clear. As compared to friendships of either sex, opposite-sex romantic relationships were characterized by more liking, more love, more comfort and greater emotional closeness. The second finding is that women's friendships were defined as more loving and intimate than men's friendships.

This is consistent with the repeated gender difference found in research on intimate relationships.

Indeed, the research clearly indicates that there are gender differences in same-sex friendship patterns. Both men and women are socially encouraged to focus the fulfillment of their intimate needs in a romantic heterosexual relationship. Theoretically, men may be intimate with their friends -- and fortunately many actually are -- but research repeatedly finds men's friendships to be sociable rather than intimate. Men generally focus on the joint tasks and activities done with friends as the important aspect of the friendship. Women, on the other hand, are allowed more lattitude with their same-sex friends. Their friendships are generally more intimate, and the women generally focus on the intimate relationship with their friend and its emotional payoff as the important aspect of the friendship. Although affection is allowed greater expression between women, romance and sex are not viewed as valid options for either men or women and their same-sex friends.

Obviously, women have more sources available to satisfy intimate needs than men, and thus, more opportunity for intimate experiences. This sex difference is well expressed by Rubin (1974) who links the observed difference to sex-role socialization: "The male role, for all its task-related 'likability' may limit the ability to love. Loving for men may be channeled exclusively into a single opposite-sex relationship, whereas women may be able to experience and express attachment, caring, and intimacy in other relationships, as well" (p. 390).

It is important to point out that Ramey's (1976) concepts of intimate friendship and primary relationships offers a valuable, viable alternative to the traditional rigid distinction between romantic relationships and

friendships. His reconceptualization allows the individual to choose or create many more valid options to satisfy unique individual needs. Sexual intimacy is viewed by Ramey as a potential option for all intimate friendships -- same-sex and/or opposite-sex. Love, too, is viewed as an important component of all intimate friendships, but is "stronger" in primary relationships. Primary relationships are only one of the many possible types of intimate friendships and are distinguished mainly by the degree of time and psychic space committed by the individuals to the relationship. The individual, in this model, is free to choose to pursue one or more primary relationships concurrently or independently of any number of intimate friendships; or, to choose to have any number of intimate friendships and no primary relationships; or to choose to have no intimate friendships and/or primary relationships at all. Ramey's model assumes the need for the individual to transcend traditional sex-role socialization, couple-front socialization, and the culturally imposed distinctions between friendships and romantic relationships. Ramey recognizes the strong pull for sociocultural conformity and the difficulty of the task of challenging traditional notions of intimate relationships.

The sharp distinction between romantic relationships and friendships, and the socially encouraged focus on the heterosexual romantic, dyadic relationship to fulfill intimate needs, presents a particularly difficult task for gay men. Their task is to actualize their needs for emotional, affectional, and sexual satisfaction in intimate relationships with other gay men. To satisfy these needs they must choose their same-sex friends and lovers from among the same men. While this task may seem similar to the task of those subjects studied by Guinsburg (1973), for whom friends and lovers were both opposite-sex, it is different in two fundamental ways. First, opposite-sex relationships are "allowed" to be intimate, romantic and sexual; same-sex

relationships may be intimate, but not romantic or sexual. Second, male-female relationships are structured by generally supportive external norms, and are governed by sex-role expectations which are basically complementary. Male-male relationships are structured by norms which encourage sociability and a task and/or activity orientation, rather than intimacy. In addition, male-male relationships are governed by sex-role expectations which encourage competition, struggles for power and control, emotional distance and withdrawal, little self-disclosure, minimal emotional and interpersonal risk taking, and an aversion to openness and vulnerability.

Clearly, men are discouraged from intimacy, and certainly sex and romance with one another. The gay man's goal of intimacy, romance, and sex with other gay men runs counter to everything he has learned socially. Their path in pursuit of meeting these needs is strewn with major culturally imposed, as well as internalized, obstacles. The task of gay men in actualizing their needs for satisfying intimate relationships is different from the task of heterosexual men and women, and from that of lesbians as well. Each group has different needs, is subject to different social and psychological forces, and receives different kinds and levels of support from society for their intimate relationships. The task of fulfilling intimate needs for gay men is unique and difficult. However, it is a task that provides a unique opportunity and challenge to go beyond restrictive biases and rigid distinctions in order to satisfy unique individual needs in creative ways.

GOALS OF THE PRESENT STUDY

The review of the literature in chapter one reveals that a multitude of compounding variables determine the relativity of the individual's conception and experience of intimacy, as well as the complex, multifaceted, nature of intimate relationships. For the purposes of the present study, four of the most significant of these variables will be examined in detail: 1) the historical context of the relationship; 2) the sociocultural and subcultural context of the individual; 3) sex differences and the individual's sex-role identity; and, 4) individual life-span developmental factors. Through a review of the literature on intimacy and on intimate relationships (i.e., friendships, romantic and/or sexual relationships) between gay men, the general effects of these four variables on the nature of intimate relationships will be explored, and their specific effects on intimacy between gay men will be stressed.

It will be established that an understanding of the historical and sociocultural context is essential to understanding the nature of intimate relationships at any point in time. The specific historical determinants and sociocultural parameters of the contemporary context of intimate relationships in the United States will be outlined.

The uniqueness of the gay man's task in seeking satisfactory emotional, affectional and sexual intimacy with other gay men derives from two basic factors. The first pertains to the fact that he is homosexual. Therefore, intimate relationships between gay men will be examined within the context of the oppressive homophobia of the dominant heterosexually-oriented culture within which the gay male community exists. The historical context of the of the transformation of the closeted, deviant homosexual subculture existing prior to the Stonewall Riots of 1969 to a satellite gay culture with several

well defined subcultures operative within it will be explored. The importance of the emerging gay male community's role in facilitating the individual's transition from a homosexual identity to a gay identity will be stressed. However, it is postulated that aspects of this gay male community -- particularly the emphasis on sexuality, masculinity, conformity, and drugs -- serve to function as "mechanisms of escape from freedom" in Fromm's sense. They serve to offer the individual gay men external structure and relief from the anxiety and confusion inherent in his need to question basic sociocultural assumptions because of his oppression as a homosexual male. It seems that these mechanisms may ultimately be detrimental to intimate relationships between gay men, and to the development of a creative, individual positive gay identity.

It is further postulated that the homosexual boy has unique needs -- relative to heterosexual boys -- for emotional, affectional and sexual intimacy with other boys and men. It is postulated that this need significantly affects the boy's interaction with his father and/or significant other men, as well as the nature of his relationships with other boys. It is suggested that these early relationships with significant boys or men -- as well as same-sex intimate relationships throughout his life -- have an effect on later same-sex relationships. In this light, special attention will be focused on Sullivan's concept of pre-adolescent same-sex chumships, and on the nature of intimate friendships at different points in the life course. The second focus of the effects of life-span developmental factors on the nature of intimate relationships will be on the crucial interplay between the development of self-identity and intimate relationships. Erikson's developmental model will be stressed. By extension, the debilitating effects of internalized homophobia on the development of self-identity in homosexual men -- i.e., identity confusion -- will be examined. The importance of "coming out" -- the acquisition of a

homosexual identity and the transition from a homosexual to a gay identity -- as an individual developmental process which significantly affects intimacy between gay men will be explored.

The second basic factor that determines the uniqueness of the gay man's task derives from the fact that he is a man and looks to relationships with other men to satisfy many of his needs for emotional, affectional, and sexual intimacy. In our society, men are taught to focus on romantic heterosexual dyadic relationships to satisfy their needs for intimacy. Men are taught to be sociable and task or activity oriented with each other. Romance and sex are not generally viewed as potential aspects of male/male intimacy. Yet, these are some of the most important aspects of what gay men seek from each other. The implications of this dilemma will be explored.

Traditional male sex-role socialization has been shown to have restrictive effects on men's intimate relationships -- especially with other men. The social process of homophobia serves to maintain these traditional male sex roles and their restrictive nature. This occurs through the "causal connection" between homosexuality and sex-role inversion (i.e., men doing or feeling anything "feminine") established by dominant cultural stereotypes of homosexual men. This erroneous "causal connection" has had profound effects on the individual homosexual's sex-role identity, on the role of masculinity within the gay community, and ultimately on intimacy between gay men. The nature of these relationships will be stressed.

Five additional sources of data will be utilized in this second section: 1) empirical social science studies which have directly examined the variables of interest as they specifically affect gay men; 2) general studies of homosexuality and/or gay men; 3) theoretical and/or literary articles in the gay media; 4) three years of supervision and training of graduate students working

with gay men in individual, group and "couples" therapy in a counseling center for gay people in New York City; and, 5) seven years of clinical experience working predominantly with gay men in individual, group, "couples," and sex therapy in New York City.

It must be stressed that the focus on the current study is on gay men. It is assumed that there are significant differences between gay men and lesbians regarding their conception and experience of intimacy, as well as differences in the nature of intimate relationships between gay men and between lesbian women. It is suggested that a similar exploration of intimacy between lesbians be undertaken, by lesbians, in order to obtain a more complete understanding of the lesbian experience of intimacy, the range and diversity of experience within the entire gay community, and the nature of the differences that exist between the experiences of lesbians and gay men in our society.

CHAPTER TWO

HISTORICAL DETERMINANTS AND THE SOCIOCULTURAL CONTEXT OF INTIMATE RELATIONSHIPS

An understanding of the historical determinants and the sociocultural context is essential to understanding the social meaning of intimacy and the social parameters of intimate relationships at any point in time. The intimate relationships between gay men must be explored within the contemporary context of intimate relationships in the United States. Therefore, the specific historical determinants of the contemporary sociocultural context of intimate relationships will be examined.

One of the factors determining the uniqueness of the gay man's task in seeking satisfactory emotional, affectional, and sexual intimacy with other gay men derives from the fact that he is homosexual in a homophobic environment. Therefore, intimate relationships between gay men will be examined within the context of the oppressive homophobia and heterosexual bias of the dominant heterosexually-oriented culture within which the gay male community exists. The historical context of the transformation of the closeted, deviant homosexual subculture existing prior to the Stonewall Riots of 1969, to a satellite gay culture with several well defined subcultures operative within it will be explored. The importance of the emerging gay male community's role in facilitating the individual's transition

from a homosexual to a gay identity -- thus facilitating his intimate relationships -- will be stressed. However, it is postulated that aspects of this gay male community -- particularly the emphasis on conformity, masculinity, and sexuality -- serve to function as "mechanisms of escape from freedom" in Fromm's sense. They serve to offer the individual gay man external structure and relief from the anxiety and confusion inherent in his need to question basic sociocultural assumptions because of his oppression as a homosexual male. It seems that these mechanisms may be detrimental to the development of a creative, individual positive gay identity and ultimately to intimate relationships between gay men.

THE HISTORICAL DETERMINANTS OF INTIMACY

The social meaning of intimacy results from the convergence of a complex multitude of variables. Historical determinants, cultural and subcultural factors, geographical, and economic factors are prime among these variables. The social meaning of intimacy changes over the course of history, is different in different cultures and subcultures, varies from one geographic area or community to another and is relative to the prevailing economic order. The specific social order generates the social parameters of intimate relationships, i.e. the nature of the expectations, assumptions, ideals, myths, and rules regarding intimate relationships.

It must be stressed that the social "reality" of intimate relationships is often quite different from sociocultural ideals and myths. Therefore, it is necessary to examine various aspects of the "social reality" to understand the social meaning of intimacy and the parameters of intimate relationships. Discrepancies between these aspects of social reality seem to be the rule, with ideals and myths lagging behind the current social reality of intimate relationships, and reflective of an "older" social order.

Knowledge of historical and sociocultural factors is essential to understanding intimacy from three perspectives: 1) the individual's phenomenological world of intimacy; 2) the work and findings of the observer of intimate relationships; 3) the social meaning of intimacy and the parameters of intimate relationships at any point in time. Each perspective will be addressed, with the primary focus on the contemporary sociocultural context of intimate relationships in the United States.

Effects on the Individual's Phenomenological Perspective

Historical and sociocultural factors affect the individual's conception and experience of intimacy in several major ways. First, the individual, embedded within a specific social order, learns the social meaning of intimacy and the parameters of intimate relationships through socialization. The opportunities for, and restrictions on, intimate relationships are delimited by the social order. Individuals learn the conceptions, expectations, assumptions,

ideals, rules and behavioral options regarding intimacy that are socially sanctioned by their culture and subculture at that point in time. Historical events and processes change the social meaning of intimacy and the parameters of intimate relationships, and thus affect what the individual is taught. In addition, the sociocultural context affects the level of support or sanctions individuals receive from the community for their relationships.

From this perspective intimacy may be viewed as a social demand. Raush (1977) suggests that the individual may identify with, comply with, or resist these social demands. Interestingly, he stresses active acceptance (identification), passive acceptance (complying), or active rejection (resistance). He seems to leave little room for the individual to develop creative, alternative ways of dealing with these social demands, or indeed, actively seeking to change these demands. In fact, there seems to be little stress in our culture on creative approaches to intimate relationships to meet unique individual needs. Interpersonal creativity is not socially reinforced. Creative attempts have either been denied or seen as resistance or deviance. Those who are creative in their approach to their intimate relationships often keep private about it, or push for acceptance of, rather than receive support for, their efforts.

The second way historical and sociocultural factors affect the individual's conception and experience of intimacy is noted by Douvan (1977) and Kilpatrick (1975) among others. The confluence of historical and sociocultural factors directly affects aspects of the

individual's personality and sense of identity, thereby affecting the individual's needs, expectations, perceptions, feelings and behavior regarding intimate relationships. These factors may act to promote and/or inhibit the individual's intimate relationships.

The individual's phenomenological world of intimacy changes over time and is relative to the individual's unique history of intimate relationships. Individuals' unique intimate experiences shape their phenomenological world of intimacy, but always in reference to the demands of the larger social order. An understanding of the history of individuals' unique experiences with intimate relationships over their life course is essential to understanding their current personal definition and experiences of intimacy.

Effects on Observers of Intimate Relationships

The work of the theoretical, empirical and clinical observer of intimacy occurs within a specific historical and sociocultural context. This context affects observers in two major ways. First, their unique phenomenological world of intimacy develops in reference to the general social order and their own intimate experiences. Their unique intimate world affects how they approach their study or observation of intimate relationships. Second, the professional "Zeitgeist" of the observers determine their conception of intimacy, what aspects of intimacy they investigate, and what methods they utilize in their pursuit. Differential sets of assumptions, biases, theoretical perspectives, research methods and levels of analysis are

relative to the historical and sociocultural milieu of the researcher. Results of different observers must be compared only with the recognition of the effects of differential sociocultural, personal and professional milieus. What appear as conflicting and contradictory results often make more sense when the historical and sociocultural context of the investigator is understood.

Three levels of analysis have generally been utilized by observers to explore the nature of intimacy. The observer can focus on the sociocultural context of intimacy (i.e., the social meaning of intimacy and the social parameters of intimate relationships); the individual's phenomenological world of intimacy; and/or the interpersonal relationship between the intimates. If the observer focuses on the relationship between intimates, an understanding of the phenomenological world of each partner can clarify the interpersonal relationship between them. It also can help in understanding the interpersonal problems that occur between intimates. Both for the clinician and for the intimates themselves, understanding the often non-communicated differential sets of needs, expectations, assumptions, ideals, rules and experiences of the partners regarding intimate relationships in general and their relationship in particular, helps explain the problems between them. The communication and sharing of these differences by the partners not only enhances intimacy, but often can help them to understand, and work to change, the difficulties encountered by them in their relationship.

Effects on the Sociocultural Context of Intimate Relationships: The Contemporary Context

The purpose of this section is to examine the specific historical determinants and sociocultural parameters of the contemporary context of intimacy in the United States. Observers have focused on factors occuring during two major periods in American history as critical to understanding this contemporary context. The first period centers on the industrial revolution and extends from the early 19th century until the early 20th century. The second was the period of rapid social change occurring since World War II, but especially since the mid 1960s.

The Nineteenth to Mid Twentieth Century

An historical process with significant impact on the nature of intimate relationships began in the early 19th century and continued into the mid 20th century. This was the industrial revolution and the accompanying shift from a society of small, close, stable communities to a mass, anonymous, urbanized society. These events have had important ramifications for intimate relationships. For example, Simmel (1908) pointed to increased differentiation among people leading to segmented, restricted, and sociable, rather than intimate, relationships. Increased individuation, isolation, segmented role relations and psychological stress as a result of urbanization are mentioned by Davis (1973). Levinger (1977) points out that in an urban society, anonymity and independence are encouraged, and the

individual loses an important source of support from the close network of relationships available in the smaller community. As the extended family decreases in importance, the nuclear family and especially the pair relationship become more important and serve to support the isolated individual and provide a refuge from alienation. Block (1980) points out that increased geographical and social mobility, and occupational turnover result in increased guardedness, less emotional commitment, and short-term friendships.

Gadlin (1977) suggests that rapid urbanization and industrial development have led to a separation of the public and private domains. To Gadlin this separation of public and private has had important ramifications for intimate relationships. As work and home became separate spheres of existence, interpersonal relationships became fragmented. The public and private spheres required different, and at times, conflicting personality characteristics and created opposing pressures on personal identity. "Clearly, those traits appropriate to success in the business world were generally imcompatible with close personal relationships -- restricted kindness, increased selfishness, and heightened distrust of others hardly are promotive of deep romantic love and sustained intimacy" (p.47).

Douvan (1977) recognizes other historical events and trends during the 19th and early 20th centuries that have had a profound effect on the American character and, in turn, on intimate relationships. The frontier mentality and the American heritage of immigration have combined to engender a fear of encumberance and a discomfort with

social connectedness. In addition, this heritage "imposed" denial, emotional constriction -- to avoid guilt and anxiety -- and an "isolated narcissistic conception of individualism" (p.28) on American males, who had abandoned and denied their past, their homelands, and often, their families. The individual was seen as separate from, and in opposition to, society. This led to an exaggerated choice between interpersonal and social relatedness on the one hand, and individual autonomy on the other.

Another related factor that Douvan suggests shaped our contemporary sociocultural context of intimacy, was the belief in unlimited progress and unlimited resources. This led to the assumption that choices and acts carried no consequences; that the past could be denied and a new life started at any point in time. The ultimate consequence of this view is a disregard for commitment.

Other factors occuring in the early 20th century included the replacement of the Victorian concept of sexuality by the Freudian notion of sexuality, the beginnings of the birth control movement, and the development of popular mass media. It was not, however, until the second half of the 20th century -- especially since the mid 1960s -- that these trends were popularized and had their most dramatic effects on intimate relationships.

Mid Twentieth Century

This period -- since the mid 1940s -- is the second period stressed by observers as critical to understanding the contemporary

context of intimacy. This has been a period of major, rapid social change. In part, this change is the culmination of trends started earlier, in part, new social ideas and values emerged as old values were questioned and old myths exploded by a rapidly changing world.

Ramey (1976) focused on the historical and sociocultural factors since World War II and especially since the mid 1960s -- which have produced a technological, biological and sexual revolution in the United States. He points out that a broad overview of how these changes have affected intimate relationships is difficult. This is due to two factors -- the rapidity of the change, and the fact that actual changes in attitudes, behavior, and values preceed changes in cultural ideals and norms. These sociocultural changes have produced confusion and conflict about intimate relationships, as traditional concepts are challenged and emerging new concepts are explored. Two areas of change are cited by observers: the technological and the social.

<u>Effects of technological changes</u>. Ramey (1975) points to the importance of the shift from an industrial, to a post-industrial -- or technological -- society. This has led to a concommitant shift from an emphasis on work to an increased emphasis on leisure time activities. Medical technology has led to an increased life span expectancy and successful treatment of previously life-threatening illness. It has also increased options in positive, and permanent contraception and legal abortion. This has allowed for increased

family planning ability as well as the separation of the reproduction and childbearing functions from sex. This increased sexual freedom has led to a "sexual revolution," challenging the Freudian notion of sexuality with an as yet confused, conflictual, and ambivalent sexualtiy.

In his discussion of the "technological intimacy" of the contemporary period (post-1940), Gadlin (1977) states that sociocultural and historical factors have created a situation in which self-fulfillment and satisfying intimate relationships are seen as incompatible. Sexuality and emotional intimacy have been separated and both have been transformed, and reduced, to indivudual technological skills. Sexual intimacy may now proceed, rather than follow, social and emotional intimacy. Successful sexual performance has become the goal and a measure of self-fulfillment. Gadlin views this development as an attempt to reintegrate the public and private domains on the basis of the current technological economy. Another manifestation of the intrusion of the economic order into the interpersonal realm is seen in the increase of legal contracts between intimate partners. Further, "We have moved toward a new consumerism in which the products consumed are other persons who are appreciated in terms of their ability to satisfy our fragmented needs" (p.70).

Davis (1973) points to changes in transportation and communication. This has allowed for both increased physical distance, yet at the same time, increased options for contact between these separated intimates. One of the most important technological advances

has been in mass media which has steadily gained in popularity and influence. It has provided a forum for the dissemination of information to a wider range of people, and for the discussion and exploration of alternative life style experiences. In turn, the mass media's focus on these changes has had the effect of increasing the pace of social change.

Effects of social change. The second area of rapid change since the mid 1960s may be viewed as "social" in character. The prime advance has been the Women's Movement which has questioned traditional sex-role socialization, as well as the traditional distribution of power and division of labor. Women have demanded equal rights with men, they have increased their options, legitimized their sexuality, and assumed more powerful positions in the workplace and in society. Their questioning of traditionl sex-roles has led to a more general cultural reevaluation of sex roles, and has even led to a small Men's Movement -- also questioning the restrictions imposed on them by traditional conceptions of sex roles. The Women's Movement has also led to opposition and has created conflict among women. The exact ramifications of this revolutionary development are as yet unclear. Its effects on intimate relationships are even less clear. Douvan (1977) however, regards the reevaluation and equalization of sex roles as the one hopeful sign for the future of intimate relationships. Other "movements" of the 1960s and 1970s -- the Civil Rights Movement and Gay Rights Movement -- have affected the nature of intimate

relationships. The potential effects of the Gay Rights Movement on intimate relationships between gay men will be explored at a later point.

Another important social change has been the increased influence and popularization of psychology in the 1960s and the "me decade" of the 1970s. This has occured through the many manifestations of the Human Potential Movement including human relations training, sensitivity and encounter groups, EST, Esalen, and the "how to," "self-help" guides to better mental health. Kilpatrick (1975) and Block (1980) believe these movements are responses to a rapidly changing world, which have been pushed to extremes. They express concern at the over-emphasis on individual self-actualization and "fluid self-identity" at the expense of intimacy and commitment. They both view this as an imbalance that needs redressing. Ramey (1975) sees the self-growth movement as a manifestation of the emergent centrality of the individual as "the basic building block of society." He sees the movements as helping individuals cope with their isolation and alienation and their increased centrality in society. Gadlin (1977) sees this phenomenon as the application of technological principles to social relations, and the manifestation of the reduction of emotional intimacy to technological skill.

Certainly, the emergence and popularity of the "Human Potential Movement" in its many manifestations indicates a felt need and desire for more fulfilling intimate relationships. It also indicates a need for structure and skills to "master" a confusing, anxiety producing,

overwhelming world which engenders a sense of helplessness and powerlessness in the individual. Its appeal seems to rest in its providing techniques and skills which can help individuals feel less anxious and overwhelmed, as well as more powerful and in control of their world -- especially their intimate world. However, it is unclear whether it has helped people achieve more satisfactory intimate relationships or just compounded the problem as Kilpatrick suggests. The "movement" itself certainly seems consistent with the historical trends of narcissistic individualism and the emphasis on the technological mastery of problems. The difficulty with the many manifestations of "the movement" has been it's excesses -- it's commercialism and consumerism, and it's reduction of the interpersonal to a set of simplistic skills and rules. Clearly, learning and developing interpersonal skills -- especially communication skills-can facilitate intimacy in relationships and needs to be encouraged. However, when the skills become "rules" and rigid "shoulds," it is questionable whether anything is facilitated except anxiety reduction and conformity.

There have been other social changes since the mid 1960s that have affected the nature of intimate relationships. Kilpatrick (1975) mentions the "new tribalism" with its emphasis on Eastern mysticism and the negation of individual identity. Davis (1973) mentions the hippie culture, the New Left, the new-rustics and communes of the 1960s as a factor.

Ramey (1975) mentions the break with absolutism in "the Church" as a factor. Ramey's mention of the church is the only reference to its effect on intimacy, except for Gadlin's discussion of the Puritans. This is quite surprising since it seems obvious that most religious orders have clear rules and regulations regarding interpersonal relationships -- especially relationships between the sexes. While the influence of the church has declined recently, it has played an important historical role in this country. In fact, religion seems to be regaining some of it's strength and reemerging through "born-again Christians," the fundamentalists, and the Moral Majority. Reemergent religious groups and the New Right political interests have combined in political action groups -- such as the Moral Majority, pro-family, and "right to life" groups -- whose political influence is growing. One of their strongest "moral" positions is anti-gay. The emergence of these groups and their growing influence is bound to have an effect on intimate relationships between gay men.

Several major social trends are not discussed much in the literature. One of these is the recent shift in population and industry from the Frost Belt to the Sun Belt. A related trend, vaguely referred to as "increased geographical mobility," is the move to the suburbs, the exurbs, as well as the recent gentrification of the cities.

Many investigators focus on urbanization as a factor which leads to alienation, isolation, and a lack of satisfactory intimate relationships. Block's (1980) data, however, indicate that city

dwellers expressed "greater friendship satisfaction" than small town or rural inhabitants. Block concludes: "Looking for a friend? It seems you are more likely to be successful among the concrete structures than among the trees of small-town America" (p.221). It seems, however, that the important difference may be less in the expressed satisfaction with friendships than with the different needs of urban dwellers and small town inhabitants. It has been noted that small communities provide little privacy and constant surveillance for it's inhabitants. Urban environments, on the other hand, encourage anonymity and independence, and offer sufficient privacy. It seems that the small town resident may require privacy and some measure of separateness and individuation from other community members. Individuals thus may be less inclined to seek closer interpersonal relationships than the urban dweller who may need to seek out close relationships to counteract the sense of isolation and lack of interpersonal connection engendered by urban living. Perhaps close friendships are more satisfying to urban dwellers because of a greater need for intimate human contact. It seems that success in, and satisfaction with, friendships must be understood in the context of differing needs for friendship.

Another aspect of "increased geographical mobility" is its effect on the nature of friendship. Block (1980) comments on the positive value placed on long-term, if not life long, friendships in our culture. Short term relationships are viewed as superficial and devoid of commitment. Commitment and success are measured in terms

of the longevity of the relationship. Block questions these assumptions and values and points out that because of increased geographical and social mobility and occupational turnover, "temporary relationships are here to stay." Because of this mobility and the consequent interruptions in friendships, people have learned to guard themselves against loss by becoming less emotionally commited to friendships. Block makes some important suggestions about this issue. He suggests a reevaluation of attitudes toward short term relationships. He suggests a greater appreciation of the value of these relationships, and the opportunities provided for interpersonal sharing regardless of the duration of the relationship. He also suggests the necessity of learning new interpersonal skills in dealing with short-term intimate relationships: "We need to develop our abilities not only in initiating relationships but in ending them; we need to learn not ony to affiliate but to disaffiliate" (p.220). His point is well taken. One of the main criteria for success in intimate relationships has been longevity. Often, little attention is placed on the quality of interaction. A new appreciation of the possibility of intimacy in short-term relationships and the value of this human connection is welcomed as is the recognition of the need for learning new interpersonal skills to meet changing needs.

Another social trend not often discussed in the literature is the contemporary economic reality of alternative life styles: cohabitation; two-income families; multi-adult households; triadic and other multiple primary relationships; as well as divorced and/or

single parent families. This neglect seems to reflect most observers couple-front bias -- the implicit assumption that intimate relationships are dyadic. The neglect of this social trend is however surprising in view of the emphasis on the economic domain as an important determinant of intimate relationships -- especially by Gadlin (1977). Clearly the economic determinants and consequences of these alternative lifestyles will have an effect on the definition, circumstances, and manifestations of "private" intimate relationships in contemporary America.

Overview of the Contemporary Sociocultural Context of Intimacy

The overwhelming emphasis in the literature has been on the numerous historical and sociocultural factors which work against the formation, development, and maintenance of intimate relationships in contemporary America. Old cultural values, myths, and ideals about intimate relationships are being challenged and reevaluated in the face of rapid social change and changing individuals needs. Traditional concepts are often inadequate for, and irrelevant to, current social realities, but new ideas and definitions are as yet unclear. The current social meaning and parameters of intimacy are thus confused, ambivalent, and conflictual (Gadlin, 1977). This, in turn, has led to ambivalence, conflict and confusion in individuals' conceptions, ideals, expectations, assumptions and behavior regarding their intimate relationships (Ramey, 1975). Kilpatrick (1975) points out that rapid social change makes self-definition more difficult and

identity diffusion more likely. The individual is deprived of a sense of continuity and stability, and psychological stress results.

What emerges from this complex picture is a confused, conflictual, ambivalent, and psychologically stressful sociocultural context of intimate relationships in contemporary America. Numerous historical trends have combined to produce fragmented, systematized, sociable relationships between narcissistic, isolated, alienated and lonely people who are guarded, emotionally constricted and fear encumberance, intimate involvement and commitment. Sexual intimacy and emotional intimacy are separated and both have been reduced to technological skills. People feel overwhelmed, helpless, anxious and out of control because of a rapidly changing, confusing world. They seek outside structure, rules and skills to help themselves feel more in control of their lives and less anxious. They seek improved interpersonal skills and more satisfying interpersonal relationships.

Recognizing this as a time of understandable confusion and conflict may do much to help people feel less anxious about their confusion. It also may help people to understand the need to reconceptualize intimate relationships to satisfy changing psychological and social needs.

One of the most consistent findings (Gadlin, 1977; Levinger, 1977; Ramey, 1975) is that the nuclear family, and especially the dyad, is regarded as the source of support and the refuge from the alienation and isolation of the outside world. This has placed unreasonable demands on the nuclear family and the dyad to satisfy all the

individual's needs for intimate contact with others. At the same time that we have demanded less from our fragmented, sociable relationships, we have demanded more from our intimate relationships. Placing this increased burden on our intimate relationships increases the likelihood that they will be unsatisfactory and ultimately exacerbate the feelings of isolation, alienation, and distrust of others that these intimate relationships are a refuge from in the first place. Recognizing the inordinate demands being placed on intimate relationships may help people feel more comfortable with the increased psychological and interpersonal stress that results from these increased demands.

The picture that emerges of the contemporary context of intimacy does not seem to be a very conducive sociocultural environment for the formation, development, and maintenance of intimate relationships. Yet, the recent sociocultural changes may provide the basis for more satisfactory intimate relationships in the future. There has been a recognition of the need for more satisfying intimate relationships as well as a recognition of the need for the development and learning of new interpersonal skills. Old myths and outmoded values -- especially the restrictions of oppressive traditional sex roles -- are being challenged and questioned. People are struggling to creatively meet their needs for more satisfying intimate relationships.

Ramey (1975) points to three major conceptual changes in American society that may prove conducive to more satisfying intimate relationships in the future. First, there has been a change in the

conception of society. The traditional conception -- articulated by Parsons (1951) and others -- views society as a social system that strives to maintain stability and equilibrium through the self-correcting effects of consensus. Change was viewed as an aberration that needed correction. The newly emergent conception views conflict and change -- rather than equilibrium -- as the constant in society and in relationships. Stability in systems is viewed as a myth. Accepting conflict and change as natural expands options for the social system, intimate relationships, and for the individual.

The second conceptual change is the realization that the individual, and not the family, is the "basic building block of society." This has resulted in an increased focus on individual choice in creating one's own life style to satisfy unique individual needs.

The third important conceptual change involves a slowly emerging "democratic pluralism" in which the value of differences is recognized and the individual may choose among, or create, many alternative lifestyles, all of which are viewed as equally valid. The conception that the conventional nuclear family -- a working father, and housewife mother in a monogamous marriage with children -- was the only alternative available to the individual, is being rejected. Instead, the social reality that a majority of Americans live alternative lifestyles -- and only a minority live in conventional nuclear families -- is slowly being recognized and accepted.

Recognition and acceptance of this pluralism decreases the discrepancy between the dominant cultural ideal and the social reality. This may do much to decrease people's anxiety, guilt, and sense of failure in not actually living up to the cultural ideal. In addition, it opens up the possibility of creating new life-style options to satisfy unique individual needs with decreased social sanctions and, perhaps, increased social support for creativity.

Ramey's conceptions value and support the importance of individual choice in creating one's own life style and satisfying unique individual needs. His ideas offer support to individuals for their courage to struggle to free themselves from traditional biases and restrictions.

Davis (1973) views the intimate relationship as essentially non-normative, and as generating its own moral reality. He feels that the intimate relationship thus "frees individuals from the tyranny of the sociological determinants -- in particular, from the behaviors required by their statuses and situations whose normative rules they had no hand in making" (p.290). Thus, to Davis, social and historical factors generate the individual's need for intimacy and the parameters of the intimate relationship. At the same time, it is the intimate relationship that allows individuals to free themselves from these sociological and psychological restraints and generate new moral realities. These, in turn, will affect the future nature of intimate relationships. Douvan (1977) makes a similar point about the non-normative nature of "interpersonal relationships."

This recognition of the non-normative potential in intimate relationships mentioned by Davis (1973) and Douvan (1977) is quite important. It allows for creativity and attention to individual needs. It insures, both for the individual and for society, the seeds of change in the future reality of intimacy. It is not clear just how creative intimate relationships are in contemporary times, but the potential is there. An ability to tolerate uncertainty, ambiguity, conflict, and anxiety, and an ability to function autonomously seem to be helpful characteristics for those creating new ways of "being intimate." The everchanging complex world demands creative solutions to new problems. Slowly, new ways of being intimate emerge and may ultimately be accepted as valid ways of meeting complex, unique, individual needs for intimacy. In these creative intimate relationships, lie the seeds for the future.

HOMOSEXUALITY IN HISTORICAL AND SOCIOCULTURAL CONTEXT

The intimate relationships between gay men must be explored within the contemporary context of intimate relationships in the United States, as well as within the historical context of the oppression of homosexuality in America and the emergence of a gay male community in response to that oppression.

One of the most important factors in understanding the gay man lies in the reality of homosexual oppression expressed through homophobia and heterosexual bias. It is in reaction to this sociocultural oppression and its internalization by the individual, that the basic outlines of the gay male experience must be considered.

From a cultural perspective homophobia has been defined by Morin and Garfinkle (1978) as "any belief system which supports negative myths and stereotypes about homosexual people. More specifically, it can be used to describe: a) belief systems which hold that discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation is justifiable; b) the use of language or slang, e.g. "queer," which is offensive to gay people; and/or c) any belief system which does not value homosexual lifestyles equally with heterosexual lifestyles" (p.30). By far the most powerful aspect of this definition is the third which assumes the superiority of the heterosexual lifestyle over the homosexual lifestyle as a generalized cultual attitude. Morin (1977) has labeled this a "heterosexual bias," and has explored, in depth, its history, and the implications of this bias for psychological research on lesbianism and male homosexuality.

The nature of cultural homophobia has changed over the course of history. Two major historical periods are important for understanding the current sociocultural context of homosexuality, and, by extension, intimate relationships between gay men: a) the nineteenth century; and b) the second half of the twentieth century -- beginning in the late 1940s, but especially since 1969.

Nineteenth Century

Four significant trends emerged and coalesced during the nineteenth century which together have had a profound effect on the conception of homosexuality during the twentieth century. First, the social institutions of medicine and then psychiatry assumed primary

responsibility for the social control of a wide range of behaviors, including sodomy, that were previously considered the domain of religion and law. Second, homosexuality was defined as psychopathological sexual deviance and was considered a mental illness. Third, homosexuality was viewed as central to the self-definition of the homosexual individual rather than as a forbidden act -- i.e., the sin and/or crime of sodomy. Fourth, homosexuality was "causally connected" to sex-role inversion -- i.e., homosexual males were defined by a lack of masculinity and a feminine identification.

Prior to the nineteenth century, social institutions did not focus on the homosexual as an individual. Rather, sodomy or buggery was considered "a category of forbidden acts" and the "perpetrator was nothing more than the juridical subject" of these forbidden acts (Focault, 1978, p. 43). These forbidden acts were first defined by ecclesiastical authorities as "a theological -- moral phenomenon, a sin. Next legislative bodies declared it a legal matter, a crime" (Katz, 1976, p.130). It was during the nineteenth century that sodomy became the domain of medicine and then psychiatry. Homosexuality was then viewed as a pathological sexual deviance, a mental illness, a sickness, a perversion. Concomitantly, the focus shifted from the forbidden act of sodomy to the homosexual as an individual: "The nineteenth century homosexual became a personage, a past, a case history, and a childhood, in addition to being a type of life, a life form, and a morphology with an indiscreet anatomy and possibly a

mysterious physiology. Nothing that went into his total composition was unaffected by his sexuality. It was everywhere present in him: at the root of all his actions because it was their insidious and indefinitely active principle. . . . It was consubstantial with him, less as a habitual sin than as a singular nature ... the sodomite had been a temporary aberration; the homosexual was now a species" (Focault, 1978, p.43). To Focault this process of defining what we are by our sexuality had been going on since the seventeenth century. The "peripheral sexualities" were incorporated into the process in the nineteenth century.

Bullough (1974), Focault (1978), and Bayer (1981) date the birth of the psychiatric model of homosexuality to Westphal's article on "contrary sexual sensations" in 1870, which characterized homosexuality " less by a type of sexual relations than by a certain quality of sexual sensibility, a certain way of inverting the masculine and feminine in oneself. Homosexuality appears as one of the forms of sexuality when it was transposed from the practice of sodomy onto a kind of interior androgyny, a hermaphrodism of the soul" (Focault, 1978, p. 43).

These views were significant in defining homosexuality through the 1960s. The psychiatric model, with its emphasis on etiological theories, psychodynamic explanations, and treatment -- i.e., psychotherapeutic "cures" aimed at asexualization or heterosexual reorientation — has constituted one of the most injurious aspects of homosexual oppression. This iatrogenic injury, perpetrated by the

psychiatric/psychoanalytic community on gay people was cited earlier. Katz (1976) recognizes this iatrogenic injury when he asserts that "to characterize homosexuals as products of arrested emotional development, or to propagate any such all-encompassing negative judgment, is to perpetuate an oppression that has caused gay people much mental anguish" (p. 133). In his discussion of the history of medical and psychiatric treatment of homosexuality he presents documents which are evidence of "the physical pain and mental anguish which treatment by medical practitioners have inflicted through the years upon countless anonymous Lesbians and Gay men, whom it was ostensibly designed to 'help'" (p. 131).

The views of Beiber (1962) and Socarides (1968) on homosexual relationships are instructive as they are two of the most ardent proponents of the view of homosexuality as psychopathology. In addition, their views are representative of the nature of the psychiatric oppression of gay people and reflective of the commonly accepted popular cultural views on homosexual relationships, fostered by the socially powerful psychiatric profession, and internalized by homosexual men. To Beiber (1962) the possibility of establishing intimate, enduring relationships between homosexual men is precluded, as these relationships are inherently destructive. He views these relationships as transient, ambivalent, hostile, competitive and volatile due to the homosexual's fear of intimacy and and fear of retaliation from other excluded males. Socarides (1968) viewed homosexual relationships as "masquerades" characterized by

"destruction, mutual defeat, exploitation of the partner and the self, oral-sadistic incorporation, aggressive onslaughts, attempts to alleviate anxiety and a pseudo solution to the aggressive and libidinal urges which dominate and torment the individual" (p. 8). Given his characterization of homosexual relationships, it is not suprising that Socarides believes that these relationships are destined to be an unending source of disappointment and pain.

Mid Twentieth Century

Following World War II, dissenting views developed to the orthodox psychiatric position which regarded homosexuality as psychopathological. These views developed initially out of research data that contradicted psychiatric assumptions and conclusions about sexual behavior and normality and indicated the prevelance of homosexual behavior in the general American male population, in other cultures, and among non-human primates (Frank & Beach, 1951; and Kinsey, 1948;). The research initiated during the 1950s -- in the atmosphere of the McCarthy period when suspected homosexuals were being blacklisted and purged from government -- focused on the homosexual and the homosexual community from an empirical rather than a clinical perspective (Hooker, 1957, 1958; Leznoff & Westley, 1956). For example, Hooker (1957, 1958) approached the "diagnosis" of homosexuality from an empirical perspective. She found that trained clinicians could not differentiate between nonpatient homosexuals and non-homosexuals using traditional projective assessment techniques. Her results thus challenged the view that homosexuality *per se* was

indicative of psychopathology. These research results offered encouragement and support to the homophile organizations (The Mattachine Society and the Daughters of Bilitis) that emerged during the 1940s and 1950s. In turn, these organizations provided a forum for the discussion and dissemeniation of these views.

The challenge to the orthodox psychiatric viewpoint was expanded during the 1960s by psychologists, psychiatrists and sociologists (Becker, 1963; Churchill, 1967; Hoffman, 1968; Hooker, 1963, 1965, 1966; Marmor, 1965; Szaz, 1965; Simon & Gagnon, 1967; and West, 1967). These views were integrated by a Task Force on Homosexuality established by the National Institute of Mental Health in 1967 with Hooker as chairperson (final report, NIMH, 1969). One of the most important findings to emerge from this research concerned the diversity of homosexuality: "Homosexuality is not a unitary phenomenon, but rather represents a variety of phenomena which take in a wide spectrum of overt behaviors and psychological experiences. . . . Homosexual individuals vary widely in terms of their emotional and social adjustments. Some persons who engage in homosexual behavior function well in everyday life; others are severly maladjusted or disturbed in their functioning" (NIMH, 1969, p. 3). Simon and Gagnon (1967) found that homosexuals "vary profoundly in the degree to which their homosexual committment and its facilitation becomes the organizing principle of their lives" (p. 179). Thus, the old concept of homosexuality as a unitary clinical pathological entity was challenged.

The researchers of the 1960s shifted the focus of attention from the inherent pathology of homosexuality to a consideration of the effects on the homosexual of the hostility, oppression and stigmatization of homosexuals by the dominant heterosexual culture. Relevant to the focus of the current study, Hooker (1965) reported that, contrary to psychiatric theory, two-thirds of her respondents had sustained long-term relationships. However, she also found a "fear of intimacy" -- previously used by clinicians as evidence of pathology -- among her respondents. She suggested, however, that this was not evidence of pathology, but rather an "ego-defensive" response to stigmatization imposed on the homosexual which made it difficult for relationships to last. Fear of exposure and humiliation made close contact with others a source of possible risk for the homosexual rather than a source of security. Hoffman (1968) explored the "gay world" and found that "the most serious problem for those who live in the gay world is the great difficulty they have in establishing stable paired relationships with each other" (p.66). He found gay relationships marked by "extreme promiscuity" and "sex fetishization." However, in agreement with Hooker, he regarded the most significant factor in the "problem of intimacy between male homosexuals" to be "the social prohibition against such intimacy, i.e., the social prohibition against homosexualtiy. To put the matter in its <u>most</u> simple terms, the reason that males who are homosexually inclined cannot form stable relations with each other is that society does not want them to" (p.176).

Researchers during the 1960s also explored the "deviant subculture" or "closet culture" of homosexuals. Hooker (1968) viewed the homosexual communities and subculture as "collective reactions to legal pressures and social stigma. . . . In adjusting to this stigmatized status, a large number of homosexuals in social interaction with others who share similar inclinations make it a basis of their social identity and way of life. A larger majority cope with the problems of homosexuality in other ways, whether or not they may enter some sector of a homosexual community" (pp.230-231). The homosexual community was seen as a deviant subculture which was "anomic" (Hoffman, 1968) and "an impoverished cultural unit" with "very limited content" (Simon & Gagnon, 1967, p.183). It was assumed that the members of this deviant subculture had only their deviance[5] in common. According to Humphreys (1979) the gay world in the early 1960s was "an underground phenomenon, governed chiefly by considerations of secrecy and self preservation." It was a "clandestine confederation of sexual marketplaces" with gay bars the central institution of the community. The community was marked by "bitchy gossip" and "camp effeminacy" and was "a frightened, exploited, and exploitative community" (pp.135-136). Simon and Gagnon (1967) were aware that for some people the homosexual community served simply as a "sexual market place," but they also noted that for others the community served other purposes: providing opportunities for friendship, recreation and sociability, as well as reducing guilt by providing a shared value structure. "Minimally, the community

provides a source of social support, for it is one of the few places where the homosexual may get positive validation of his own self-image" (pp.182-183). Hooker (1968) also commented on the complex structure and the multiple purposes served by "homosexual communities."

The Stonewall Riots of 1969

A radical change occurred in the homosexual community in June 1969. The "Stonewall Riots" in New York in which angry gays fought back against police harassment marked a radical transformation of the homosexual community and the emergence of a public gay liberation movement to protest oppression. "The caterpillar began to shed it's cocoon of fear, self-hatred and defensiveness." Using protest methods of the civil rights, anti-war, and feminist movements, gays transformed their deviant culture into a rich and diverse cultural entity. Consciousness raising groups were seen as essential for gays -- a group of oppressed individuals whose self-esteem had been continually and systematically assaulted -- to "come out" with a proud self image (Humphreys, 1979, pp.36-37).

Altman's (1971) view offers an interesting, early, in-process view of the changes occurring in the gay community. The intellectual recognition of being part of an oppressed, rather than a deviant, group had occurred, at least in political rhetoric. The publicly acknowledged existence of the gay community and the availability of information about homosexuality allowed the homosexual a sense of relief in discovering others who had shared the sense of being

isolated, excluded and different through their childhood and adolescence. The emergence of a gay community offered the individual a meaningful source of identity and community. It also allowed gay people living in large cities to move more freely in almost exclusively gay social circles. However, to Altman in 1971, the male "gay world" was still basically "a highly complex series of places either wholly or partly designed for the making of sexual contact," and was thus a pseudo-community held together by sexual barter (p.21).

Major Changes in the Attitudes of Mental Health Professionals

An important event for the gay community occurred on December 15, 1973, when the Board of Trustees of the American Psychiatric Association decided to remove homosexuality from its official list of mental disorders -- the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM II). This occurred after several years of bitter dispute, and was followed by a referendum by the full APA membership demanded by old-line "pathologists" -- i.e., Socarides and his supporters. The result of the referendum was a modest expression of support (58%) for the nomenclature change.[6]

Also in 1973, the first meeting of the Association of Gay Psychologists was held -- a lobbying, research and educational effort on behalf of lesbian and gay male psychologists. They urged the American Psychological Association to oppose discrimination against homosexuals and to support the action by the American Psychiatric Association removing homosexuality from the official list of mental

disorders. In January 1975, the Council of Representatives of the American Psychological Association adopted a resolution to that effect. At that time, the Council of Representatives of APA also provided funding to establish a Task Force on the Status of Lesbian and Gay Male Psychologists. Among their major tasks were fact finding, providing support and information for gay psychologists, and educating other psychologists regarding gay issues. In an attempt to assess and document the status of lesbian and gay male psychologists, the Task Force undertook a questionnaire study. The final report of the Task Force (1979) provided important developmental data about gay psychologists and found that very few lesbian and gay male psychologists were open about their "sexual orientation" in a professional context. The results of this survey have been used to make recommendations regarding specific actions which APA might undertake to improve the conditions of gay psychologists within the profession as well as ways that APA might help to improve the lives of all gay people. In 1979, the Task Force became an ongoing committee (COGC -- The Committee on Gay Concerns) of APA's Board of Social and Ethical Responsibility.

The removal of homosexuality from the official list of mental disorders by the American Psychiatric Association, the resolution of support by the American Psychological Association and the work of openly gay psychologists and psychiatrists, are important events for the emerging gay community. They added strength and the power of professional opinion to the emerging gay liberation movement which had

successfully fought the power of the psychiatric profession to define and label gay people as pathological. It "deprived secular society, increasingly dependent upon 'health' as a moral category, of the ideological justification for many of its discriminatory practices" (Bayer, 1981, p.13). It also provided individual homosexuals, who defined themselves as pathological, impetus to question and reevaluate their conception of homosexuality and their own sense of identity. In addition, it provided encouragement and support for social science research that approached homosexuality from a non-pathological perspective. Psychology -- an important social force previously used against gay people -- was now enlisted in the struggle to end the stigma of homosexuality and to help gay people lead more productive lives.

Recent Social Science Research on Homosexuals

The social science research of the 1970s, building on the pioneering work of the 1950s and 1960s and supported by the recent changes in the psychiatric/psychological view of homosexuality, broke with the medical model assumption of pathology and with the heterosexist assumption of the superiority of heterosexuality over homosexuality. These observers began instead with the assumption that a homosexual orientation was a viable alternative lifestyle which needed to be examined and explored in terms of its diversity of expression and its potentiality (APA Task Force, 1979; Jay & Young, 1979; Masters & Johnson, 1980; Peplau, 1981; Silverstein, 1981; Spada, 1979; Tripp, 1975; Weinberg & Williams, 1974).

In one of the earliest of these studies, Weinberg and Williams (1974) examined the effects of social involvement with other homosexuals on the individual's adaptation to his homosexuality. Their index of social involvement was composed of those items dealing with sociability -- i.e., proportion of leisure time socializing with other homosexuals -- as well as those items dealing with friendship -- i.e., proportion of close friends who are homosexual. Thus, they hoped to tap both involvement in the public institutions of the gay community as well as involvement with other homosexuals in more private settings. Unfortunately, they combined both aspects of social involvement to derive one score of high, medium or low. It is therefore impossible to tell the differential effects of involvement in public or private institutions.

However, they found that high social involvement with other homosexuals had definite advantages. Higher social involvement with other homosexuals was found to provide for a necessary social support system, the availability of positive role models and new information about homosexuality which challenges myths and stereotypes, increased opportunities for meeting sexual partners and friends, socialization and acculturation into the homosexual community, and the development of a more positive self-image through interactions with other homosexuals. Those high in social involvement were more likely to report having had an "exclusive" homosexual relationship. Besides providing opportunities for finding such a relationship, social involvement with other homosexuals was seen to offer social support for establishing and maintaining "exclusive" homosexual relationships.

Those low in social involvement with other homosexuals were more likely to be homophobic and to fear public exposure and labeling as homosexual. The social interactions they did have with other homosexuals tended to be superficial and relatively anonymous. Those low in social involvement reported less self acceptance and more depression, loneliness, guilt, shame and/or anxiety regarding their homosexuality. They were also more likely to seek psychiatric treatment. Those higher in social involvement had fewer psychological problems. Weinberg and Williams conclude that "It seems clear, therefore that the social support derived from social involvement with other homosexuals enhances the homosexual's self-image and psychological well-being" (p.202).

THE EMERGENCE OF THE GAY SATELLITE CULTURE

The prospects for a more positive self-image and greater psychological well-being for the homosexual were enhanced by the continued growth and development of the gay male community during the 1970s. Observers, writing at the end of the 1970s, offer a much more expansive view of the gay male community than had earlier observers. Humphreys (1979) describes an important change: "Homosexually oriented women or men, forced until recently to patronize bars, baths, or clandestine cruising areas in order to find others like themselves, may now meet them in rap groups, social clubs, political meetings, or in a wide variety of religious organizations" (p.139). Levine (1979)

describes the emergence of "gay ghettos" which are "characterized by large numbers of gay institutions and cruising places, a marked gay culture, socially isolated gay residents, and a substantially gay population" (p.199).

Humphreys (1979) makes the persuasive case that gay culture had been transformed, through the gay liberation movement, from a deviant subculture in the 1960s to a "satellite culture" by the late 1970s. This was a term developed by Eliot (1949) to describe a cultural entity that has become extensive and diverse and has spawned subcultures of its own. It can be differentiated from subcultures with their specific foci, on the one hand, and the dominant societal culture, on the other. A satellite culture has several necessary characteristics. First, "it extends beyond class and national divisions, includes a wide range of subcultures, and can claim a distinguished heritage of traditions and accomplishments." Second, the common experience of social oppression and a history of persecution is essential, but not sufficient unless a degree of freedom from oppression is realized. Thus, the third necessary characteristic for the development of a satellite culture is a concerted effort to bring about change -- freedom from oppression through a liberation movement. Satellite cultures break free from the bonds of oppression, and thus deviant cultures are transformed into rich cultural entities (Humphreys, 1979, pp.139-142).

These necessary characteristics have been met by the gay cultural system. Gays have facilitated the emergence of a satellite culture

through consciousness raising and the availability of new role models who have escaped the oppressive, internalized self-hatred of deviance, and instead feel pride in being gay. Humphreys points to an important distinction between an identity of deviance, self-hatred, ambivalence and defensiveness fostered by a deviant subculture, and the strong, positive identity fostered by the satellite culture. "The emergence of a rich and varied satellite culture profoundly affects the quality and range of identities formed by its members. If its central values are made clear, its role models viewed as successful and fulfilled, its heritage described as noble, if its members manifest pride, then strong identities will form within it" (p.145).

Humphreys' distinction between a deviant identity and a positive identity parallels the distinction that has been made, in the literature over the past decade, between a homosexual identity and a gay identity (Arrowsmith, 1981; Boswell, 1980; Levine, 1979; Morin, 1977; Morin & Schultz, 1978; Weinberg, 1973). This distinction is an important one. I am postulating that a homosexual and a gay identity are dual parallel aspects of ego identity which may be differentiated by the extent to which individuals are in conflict about their homosexual needs because they have internalized the homophobia of the dominant culture. To the extent that individuals have internalized this homophobia and are conflicted about their homosexual needs, the individual's identity may be characterized as a homosexual identity. This is a negative, deviant identity characterized by confusion, conflict, fragmentation, compartmentalization, low self-esteem and a

focus on same-sex genital sexuality. Homosexual needs are experienced as ego-dystonic and are a source of conflict for the individual. A homosexual identity works to inhibit the development and maintenance of intimate relationships between homosexual men. As individuals become less conflicted about their homosexual needs, and reject the homophobia of the dominant culture, their identity may be characterized as a gay identity. This is a healthier identity characterized by integration, stability, pride, and a sense of self-worth. Homosexual needs are experienced as ego-syntonic and are not a source of conflict for the individual. The development of a gay identity facilitates intimacy between gay men. This crucial distinction between a homosexual and gay identity will be examined in more depth in the following chapter.

Facilitating Intimacy Through the Transition From a Homosexual to a Gay Identity

The major functions of the gay male community are to offer socioemotional support to the individual in his transition from a homosexual identity to a gay identity, as well as to socialize the emerging gay male into the gay world. Much as the family of origin, school, and adolescent friendships and gangs teach the boy how to be a man in the dominant society, the gay male community offers "the individual male a program for his homosexual maleness" (Johnston, 1980, p.21).

These major functions are interrelated and subsume many other important functions. Perhaps the most important initial function comes through the realization by the homosexual male that he is not alone, that others share his sense of being isolated, excluded, and different. In the gay community, he no longer need constantly feel like an outsider. This offers the individual a sense of relief as well as a feeling of safety. The need to be accepted and be part of a safe community may be a very strong motivation after being a frightened, isolated, outsider in a hostile community most of one's life.

The gay male community offers opportunities to meet men more openly and directly for sexual encounters as well as opportunities for socializing and recreation with other gay men. It also provides important opoportunities to meet other men for the formation of friendships and "lover" relationships. Interactions with gay institutions and interpersonal experiences with other gay men challenge internalized negative stereotypes and conceptions, thus providing for the reduction of cognitive and emotional dissonance. The reality of the effects of homophobia and heterosexual oppression are realized through consciousness raising and the acquisition of new cognitive information about homosexuality, homosexual history and heritage. A new shared value structure is learned through interaction with other gay men who serve as positive role models, sources of identification, and a socioemotional support group. The homosexual learns the rules, rituals, and values of the gay culture as he becomes

socialized into the gay male community. He experiences positive validation for his self-image and his guilt is reduced. The interaction with the gay community provides for integration and stable identity formation in contrast to the identity confusion and compartmentalization of the homosexual. Through his interaction with other gay men in the gay male community, he slowly sheds his confused, conflicted, self-hating homosexual identity for a "prescribed" gay identity which is regarded as positive and liberated. To the extent that the individual's involvement in the gay male community facilitates the transition to and development of a gay identity, and provides opportunities for multi-leveled interactions with other gay men, it is postulated that this involvement will facilitate intimacy between gay men.

Factors Inhibiting Intimacy Between Gay Men

At the same time that the emergence of the gay satellite culture has functioned to facilitate the development of a more integrated gay identity and thus intimacy between gay men, there are aspects of this satellite culture which serve to inhibit the development of a creative individual identity and ultimately intimate relationships between gay men.

Other observers have commented on these dual aspects of the gay community (Eisenberg, 1974; Johnston, 1980; and Silverstein, 1981). For example, Eisenberg (1974), while commenting on the positive ways the homosexual community functions to support its members, notes how,

in addition, aspects of the value system of the homosexual community may be detrimental to the gay man, and ultimately to his intimate relationships: "There exists in the homosexual community a 'single standard criterion' by which physical attractiveness becomes a variable of overwhelming importance in interpersonal and social interaction. This leads to problems in the formation of intimate relationships, and severe conflict for older homosexuals. Additionally, the community's sanction of promiscuity leads to difficulty in the formation of stable relationships, a superficiality in relationships that do exist, an increasingly cynical outlook towards human relationships and a feeling on the part of many homosexuals that even sexuality is losing its meaning for them" (p.4648-B).

Mechanisms of Escape from Freedom

It is postulated that there are several interrelated aspects of the gay male satellite culture which function as mechanisms of escape from the freedom and the pain inherent in being homosexual in a homophobic environment. These mechanisms serve to inhibit intimacy between gay men. It must be pointed out that those factors which work to inhibit intimate relationships between gay men have their source in the same historical conditions that have dictated the facilitative factors discussed earlier -- specifically, the sociocultural oppression of homosexuality and the reaction to that oppression on both the cultural and individual level. Three aspects of the gay

satellite culture will be focused on in the remainder of the chapter: the role of conformity; the role of masculinity; and the role of sexuality within the gay male community.

According to Fromm (1941, 1965) feelings of alienation, isolation, aloneness, insecurity, powerlessness and anxiety are inherent in the individual's basic struggle between dependency and freedom. Individuals have two choices as to how to overcome this unbearable state of powerlessness and aloneness. On the one hand, individuals may embrace their freedom positively which, according to Fromm, "is identical with the full realization of the individual's potentialities, together with his ability to live actively and spontaneously" (p.297). Far more commonly, on the other hand, this state is unbearable to individuals who, weakened and frightened, are ready to escape their freedom and submit to new forms of authority by surrendering their individuality and the integrity of the self. This solution, characterized as an "escape from freedom" is not, however, a solution which leads to happiness and "positive freedom." "It assuages an unbearable anxiety and makes life possible by avoiding panic; yet it does not solve the underlying problem and is paid for by a kind of life that often consists only of automatic or compulsive activities" (p.162). The individual though, does not suffer from "the worst of all pains -- complete aloneness and doubt" (p.51).

The feelings of isolation, alienation, aloneness, insecurity, anxiety, doubt and powerlessness -- feelings that Fromm believes motivate the individual's escape from freedom -- are particularly

relevant feelings for a homosexual man growing up in a homophobic, hostile environment. In addition, growing up as a homosexual in a homophobic society and trying to satisfy one's needs for emotional, affectional and sexual intimacy with other men against external constraints and internalized ambivalences, provides the gay man unique challenges and opportunities for freedom: to free himself from internalized homophobia and develop a positive gay identity through his intimate relationships with other gay men and a supportive gay male community; to question and reevaluate traditional, restrictive and biased conceptions of intimacy between men, and of rigid sex-roles; to explore and reevaluate traditional conceptions and boundaries between romantic relationships, sexual relationships and friendships; and to work actively to meet individual needs for intimate relationships with other gay men in unique creative ways.

This freedom from traditional structure, or freedom to create new structure, may produce considerable anxiety and add to feelings of confusion, doubt, isolation and alienation in men who are seeking relief from just these same feelings. The overriding factor is the need to escape from this confusion and anxiety. The lack of rules makes the need for rigid rules all the more pressing. The gay male community offers the individual gay man external structure and relief from the confusion and anxiety arising both from his opportunity to question basic traditional sociocultural assumptions, and inherent in his oppression as a homosexual male. That is, aspects of the gay male satellite culture function as mechanisms of escape from freedom and

may be detrimental to the development of a creative individual gay identity and ultimately to intimate relationships between gay men. The relief offered by the external structure provided by the gay community to the homosexual who is confused, conflicted, anxious, powerless, overwhelmed, isolated and alone is not to be underestimated.

Fromm (1941, 1965) discusses three major mechanisms of escape from freedom, each characterized by compulsivity, and by the surrender of individuality and the integrity of the self. Each of these mechanisms has some relevance to the gay male experience. The first mechanism he labels "authoritarianism" and describes this as the "tendency to give up the independence of one's own individual self and to fuse one's self with somebody or something outside of oneself in order to acquire the strength which the individual self is lacking" (p.163). This outside power may be a person, an institution, or a community. Many gradations of dependency are included in the many manifestations of this mechanism. Fromm describes one of the most distinct forms of this mechanism as sado-masochism with the individual's aim being to find security in the "secondary bonds" of symbiosis. Sado-masochism is characteristic of a significant subculture within the urban gay male community. It is often glorified as an expression of sexual freedom and liberation. However, when sexual responses become mechanical and rigidified, it may instead serve as an escape from sexual freedom. Another manifestation of this mechanism is the "search for a magic helper." This may be manifest in the common ongoing search for "Mr. Right" by gay men. Fromm asserts that the

"process of personification of the magic helper is to be observed frequently in what is called 'falling in love.' A person with that kind of relatedness to the magic helper seeks to find him in flesh and blood. For some reason or other -- often supported by sexual desires -- a certain other person assumes for him those magic qualities, and he makes that person into the being to whom and on whom his whole life becomes related and dependent" (p.197). Coupling, therefore may be a way of escaping freedom. Support for this notion is offered by Bion's (1959) concept of the "pairing basic assumption" which is utilized by the group as a way of escaping its basic work. In addition, some evidence (APA, 1979) indicates that coupling may serve as a refuge for the individual from the anxiety engendered by first entering the gay community. It is important to keep in mind that coupling may not be an expression of intimacy, but may instead offer an escape from isolation, anxiety, and confusion.

The second major mechanism of "escape from freedom" described by Fromm is destructiveness -- the elimination of the threatening object. Fromm suggests, however, that when other persons cannot become the object of the individual's destructiveness, "his own self easily becomes the object" (p.203). It is suggested here that the rampant leisure drug and alcohol use by many gay men and the sometimes irresponsible spread of sexually-tranmitted diseases (STD) by some gay men are two manifestations of this mechanism of destructiveness in the gay community.

The third major mechanism of "escape from freedom," the solution of the majority of people in our culture, is "automaton conformity" in which "the individual ceases to be himself; he adopts entirely the kind of personality offered him by cultural patterns; and he therefore becomes exactly as all others are and as they expect him to be. . . . The person who gives up his individual self and becomes an automaton. . .need not feel alone and anxious anymore. But the price he pays, however, is high, it is the loss of his self" (p.209). The importance of conformity in contemporary culture is also mentioned by Erikson (1968) who notes "the increasing demand for conformity, uniformity, and standardization which characterizes the present stage of this, our 'individualistic' civilization" (p.195).

Conformity in the Gay Satellite Culture

The pressure and need to conform is intense in the gay community. Conformity and uniformity are socially valued while individuality is not. It seems that one of the strongest roots of this complex pull to conformity is the need to escape from both the pain and the freedom inherent in being homosexual in our culture through "automaton conformity" i.e., becoming a "gay clone." Through interaction with other gay men and with institutions in the gay male community, the homosexual male is subtly socialized into a "prescribed" gay identity. The rewards for adopting this gay identity -- or significant aspects of it -- are great. The individual's primary need upon first entering the gay community is often for socioemotional

support and acceptance. He can find these more easily in the gay male community if he learns and follows the rules. In addition, conformity increases the gay man's options for meeting other men for sociability, sex, friendship or romance. The perceived consequences of nonconformity for the homosexual male are likely to be just the isolation, aloneness, anxiety and confusion which he seeks to escape. Ultimately, however, the conformity and ritualization are restrictive, confining, and result in the loss of individuality and self integrity. This loss of self inhibits intimacy because the individual does not act spontaneously, and he does not express what he genuinely thinks or feels but rather presents a pseudo self to himself and others (Fromm, 1965, p.288). This promotes distance between partners rather than closeness and self disclosure. Most importantly, the loss of individuality works against the discovery of creative ways to meet the unique intimate needs of the individual.

The reality of the gay male experience has been dictated, in part, by the outsider status of the gay community and gay people. This status has provided gay people the opportunity to challenge and question basic restrictive sociocultural assumptions as discussed earlier. It has also created, within the gay community and within gay people, a reaction against feeling isolated, ostracized and different. On the individual level this has resulted in a strong need to feel oneself as part of a group. The need may be quite strong. It motivates the homosexual male to seek safety, support and security through both conformity and anonymity in the gay male community.

External structure is provided by adopting the "prescribed" gay identity.

The reaction to exclusion, isolation and ostracism on the cultural level is quite interesting. Being excluded from the cultural mainstream for so long, the emerging gay satellite culture seems to have developed a need to adopt, and indeed, embrace and perfect basic contemporary American values. Altman (1971) and Johnston (1980) have both taken note of this fact. For example, Altman states that "in certain fundamental ways the homosexual world mimics the straight, often exaggerating, indeed perfecting its flaws" (p.33). It is suggested that this is based, in part, on the unspoken need of the gay community to get the heterosexual majority to accept them "despite" their homosexuality; to prove that they are basically no different from them and just as respectable as they are. There is a parallel process in some individuals who manifest a heightened need to live out the American dream "despite" their being homosexual.

In embracing these contemporary American values, the gay male community stresses sociability, sexuality, performance, achievement, success, technological proficiency, material acquisition, upward mobility, recreation and leisure, outward appearances, youth, and physical attractiveness. Johnston (1980) points out in agreement, that the homosexual community "reflects a highly technical orientation towards pursuit of leisure activities, achievement display, and sexuality" (p.24). These values are reflective of the technological approach to intimacy in contemporary American culture. To the extent

that this technological intimacy works against intimate relationships in the general population, it is suggested that this approach to intimacy as well as the stress on sociability, masculine values, and sexuality characteristic of the gay male community, work against the establishment and maintenance of intimate relationships between gay men.

The Role of Masculinity and Sexuality in the Gay Male Community

Beyond the special pull to conformity inherent in the circumstances of the gay male community, the role of both masculinity and sexuality are particularly reflective of the processes just discussed and other important processes as well. The stress on masculinity and sexuality has been a mixed blessing. The exploration of masculinity and sexuality has been beneficial to gay men's self-images and has expanded the restrictive rules and boundaries established by the heterosexual community in both of these areas. At the same time, the current role of both masculinity and sexuality in the gay male community has worked to maintain a confused, fragmented and compartmentalized homosexual identity and has thus worked to inhibit intimate relationships between gay men.

The role of masculinity. Since the inception of the psychiatric position, homosexuality has been causally connected to sex-role inversion. Homosexual men were believed to be impaired in their masculine identification, by the psychiatric community, by the general

public (Levitt & Klassen, 1974; and Tarvis, 1977), and by homosexual men themselves. Internalization of this erroneous connection has done much harm to homosexual men and has resulted in sex-role identity confusion. This has functioned to inhibit intimate relationships between gay men.

Since 1969, however, there has been a reaction to the stereotype of the feminized male homosexual within the gay male community. What has emerged is a negative reaction to effeminacy and a concomitant stress placed on masculinity and masculine values. Humphreys noted the virilization -- or "the increasingly masculine image" -- of gay men in 1972 (p.70). Kleinberg (1978) pointed out that "young gay men seem to have abjured effeminacy with universal success. Muscular bodies laboriously cultivated all year round are standard; youthful athletic agility is everyone's style. . . . Hardness is in" (p.6). Silverstein (1981) calls this stress on the symbols of masculinity, "cult masculinity," determined, in part, by the traits of aggression, power and competition. More specifically, the traits of "cult masculinity" are: the worship of the phallus, together with the necessity for public displays of masculinity; the confusion between sexual pleasure and aggression; competition with lovers and the fear of intimacy with them; the fetishism of 'types'; and finally the need to control another man sexually" (p.195). Silverstein believes that "cult masculinity has replaced femininity as the social behavior of gay men. . . .'Queens' are a dying breed . . . replaced by the 'macho man' who ironically has become more macho than his heterosexual model" (pp.180-181).

There seem to be several processes occurring simultaneously that have served to reinforce the focus on American heterosexual male values and behavior within the gay male community. They may be characterized, in part, as defensive reactions arising out of the conflict generated by being a homosexual male in a homophobic, heterosexist culture. The first process reflects the fact that the prescribed masculine identity available to the gay man -- characterized by conformity -- may function as a mechanism of escaping the anxiety, confusion, and freedom inherent in the homosexual male's opportunity to explore the boundaries of traditional, restrictive sex-roles. Johnston (1980) notes that "homosexual ghetto institutions shape each man's behavior toward uniformity and predictability. A sense of security arises for all when each subscribes to a fairly rigid and familiar etiquette" (pp.27-28). Johnston points out that other gay men "suggest to the individual male a program for his homosexual maleness. . . . They provide clarification to homosexuals who have doubts concerning what it means to be a man. . . . These socially available male model builders promote a social structure and value content which each man can internalize as an automatic program for his own concept" (p.21).

The second process that has served to facilitate the stress on masculine values concerns the fact that the gay male community has embraced mainstream American values in reaction to its historical outsider position. This has been discussed above. Since our culture is basically sexist, mainstream American values are generally white,

middle-class heterosexual male values. The values embraced by the gay male community are therefore basically masculine values.

Another process may be labelled "identification with the oppressor" and is a variation on the standard process of identification with the aggressor. Anxiety is avoided by identifying with and introjecting the anxiety producing object. The individual thereby gains some degree of control over the threatening object. Kleinberg (1978) notes this phenomenon among gay men: "Homosexuals who adopt images of masculinity, conveying their desire for power and their belief in its beauty, are in fact eroticizing the very values of straight society that have tyrannized their own lives. . . . The perversity of imitating their oppressors guarantees that such blindness will work itself out as self-contempt" (pp.6-7).

Finally, the stress on masculinity and masculine values represents an overcompensation, on both the sociocultural and individual level, for the traditional feminization of homosexuality. This overcompensation is a dynamically necessary part of the change process, representing a pendulum-like reaction to oppression. The pendulum principle (Kaplan and Bean, 1976), describing the nature of the change process, emphasizes initial extremes and gradual moderation, and postulates an initial move from one extreme position to the opposite extreme. Gradually, there is moderation with the pendulum centering more and more in the middle region, but never quite remaining static. The pendulum principle postulates that homosexual men, for so long feminized by heterosexual oppression, will initially

react against this stereotype and myth with extreme masculinization of both the satellite culture and the individual. This reaction is viewed here as a necessary first step to correct an imbalance. It is hoped that it is not the end goal. Unless the gay male community stagnates at this new extreme end point, valued sex-role identity will likely moderate and stabilize in the androgynous middle ground, allowing for the integration of "masculine" and "feminine" characteristics. The extent to which a masculine sex-role identity inhibits intimate relationships between gay men will be explored in depth in chapter four.

The role of sexuality. One of the most predominant myths about homosexual men is that they are extremely "promiscuous." One of the most consistent research findings about gay men is that they are, indeed, sexually active (Bell & Weinberg, 1979; Levine, 1979; Silverstein, 1981; and Spada, 1979). Many gay men report having frequent sex with numerous sexual partners -- often hundreds or thousands over a life time -- in a variety of public and private places. Sex is an extremely important aspect of the gay male community and of the individual gay male's life.

The exaggerated importance of sexuality to the gay man derives from several important factors. The importance of physiological factors in determining the nature of the male sexual response and the level of male sexual activity is stressed by Hoffman (1968), Tripp (1975), and Silverstein (1981). Several observers have suggested that

the importance of sexuality to the homosexual male derives primarily from the importance of sexuality in male sex-role socialization (Levine, 1979; Silverstein, 1981; and Spada, 1979;). The current stress on masculinity within the gay male community also promotes the emphasis on sexuality among gay men. In addition, the exaggerated importance of sexuality derives from the fact that sexuality has been regarded as the defining and central organizing principle of the individual's homosexuality and of the gay male community.

Historically we have seen that homosexuality has been defined as a sexual orientation, preference or variation. Sexual needs have been regarded as the central and indeed defining needs of the homosexual man. Because this same-sex sexual behavior was viewed as sinful, illegal, and pathological by the dominant culture, an underground, deviant subculture -- centered on the sexual marketplace -- developed to meet these sexual needs. Sex was compartmentalized and anonymous for fear of discovery or arrest. Sex was separated from sociable and/or intimate relationships. In a classic case of "blaming the victim" (Ryan, 1971), society, mired in moral judgements about homosexuality and promiscuity, pointed to the "promiscuity" of homosexuals as evidence of their psychopathology and sexual insatiability and the reason for the instability of homosexual relationships. In reality, gay men were adapting themselves to a situation created externally by the oppression of homosexuality. Bell and Weinberg (1978) point out how the focus on anonymous sex may have been an adaptational response to a homophobic society: "Sex with

persons other than strangers can, in fact, be a liability, the occasion for blackmail and unwanted public exposure. In other words, sex without commitment or much involvement may reflect an even greater commitment to the reality of their circumstances, given the 'homoerotophobic' society (Churchill, 1967) in which they live" (p.101).

With the "liberation" of the gay community in 1969, the centrality of sexuality to homosexuality, although surrounded by political debate, was accepted by the emerging gay male community. Sexuality remained the core of the gay male community. The sexual marketplace was expanded and community services were developed to service members of the gay community who had in common their sexual orientation. The moral judgements surrounding promiscuity were generally rejected and gay male sexuality was, in contrast, celebrated and seen as a source of pride and freedom for gay men. Gay men saw themselves in the forefront of the sexual revolution, as they were liberated by their free sexuality from restrictive heterosexual standards and the conflict and confusion about sex characteristic of the heterosexual community. Spada (1979) and Silverstein (1981) are representative of this point of view. For example, Silverstein observes that "the bar scene and the pleasures available at baths and cruising places are integral aspects of the new opportunities gays have to enjoy themselves and sex. Never before in history have such openness and freedom been extended to our persecuted minority. We are savoring every moment -- and so we should -- in a scene filled with sexual

excitement and conquest" (p.181). At another point Silverstein states that "most men adore being sex objects; they like the idea of using each other's bodies as objects of physical pleasure on a temporary basis and have no difficulty separating this from their needs for love" (p.331).

As a result of these historical factors, casual, recreational, impersonal, anonymous, quick sex has been institutionalized in the gay male satellite culture. Willenbecker (1980) points out that "gay liberation has, if anything, made shadow sex a commercially viable enterprise" (p.17). Indeed, gay male sexuality is reflective of, in fact the epitome of, the technological, recreational, consumer, performance, achievement, and success orientation of the gay male community.

There are many positive elements in gay male sexuality. In many ways it has indeed functioned as liberation from the restrictive rules governing heterosexual sex in our sexually conflicted, confused and rigid society. However, Gadlin (1977) suggests that "what appears to be a liberation from past oppression is often only a transformation of the oppression" (p.65). He questioned whether the performance oriented, technically skilled sexuality of the contemporary period is actually sexual liberation or sexual oppression transformed. Gadlin's point has relevance to gay male sexuality. Because gay men are at the same time both bound by and free from traditional sexual rules, sexuality between men is a major source of conflict, anxiety, and confusion for the gay man. The lack of clear cut structure to

male/male sexuality makes the gay man's need for structure all the more important. The parameters of sexuality within the gay male community provide external structure to male/male sexual interaction and serve to relieve the anxiety and reduce the confusion and conflict of community members. Compartmentalization, conformity, specialization, genital sex, phallus worship and sexual fetishism are encouraged; sexual technique and performance are stressed; and, orgasm is the goal.

Johnston (1980), in agreement, maintains that many gay men develop mechanical, fixed, limited and dogmatic sexual responses as attempts to manage the anxiety generated by their being homosexual in this society. This "pseudo-relief" can lead the gay man into three major psychological "identity traps" which restrict him from achieving more meaningful relationships with other gay men. The first "identity trap" Johnston identifies is the reliance on repeating the familiar and secure. Functioning passively in blind service to his sexual habits and to others does not require the individual to be creative, to take risks, to make choices, or to become more self aware. A second "identity trap" which results from retreat into the familiarity of sexual habits is the fragmentation of the individual's identity into secret roles, sexual specialties, and emotionally narrow response patterns. He learns to manipulate parts of socio-sexual contexts, but does not create a sense of wholeness, and cannot effectively integrate his body with his emotions and intellect. The third "identity trap" is the surfeiting of his emotions. For gay men, emotional sharing usually occurs in an erotic context. The gay man seems to experience

feelings through sex; this heightens his senses and emotions. But, this chronic heightening ultimately dulls them, and weariness appears in much interaction between gay men. Johnston points out how these traps function to cut the gay man off from himself and in turn from others. He sees gay male sexuality -- dictated by the tyranny of the penis -- as a debilitating imitation of erotic freedom and a false sense of security arising out of sexual habit. He hopes that gay men can free themselves from this confinement and "engage with other men in the creative dynamics of love."

The centrality and availability of sex, as well as its prescribed nature, emerge as primary characteristics of gay male sexuality. These characteristics function to inhibit the intimate relationships of gay men. The constant availability of sex helps gay men learn to sexualize their needs as well as their techniques for dealing with anxiety. Silverstein (1981) points out that since many men "find 'getting their rocks off' the easiest thing to do, they fall back on it whenever they are frightened" (p.187). In addition, "since sex is easy for the man who is fearful of intimacy, he'd rather hunt the streets than develop a lover" (p.186).

Gay male sex is far from being indiscriminate, random, and non-affectionate as implied by the labels promiscuous and anonymous. Gay men are often quite discriminating in their choice of partners, and affection is often an important component of the sex. Indeed many gay men are primarily motivated by nonsexual needs in seeking anonymous sexual encounters (Tripp, 1975). Willenbecker (1980) also

notes the multiple motivations of gay men in seeking casual sex. For example, reducing anxiety, seeking a lover, or conquering others to build up low self esteem are three possible motivations he mentions. When multiple needs are sexualized, they remain undifferentiated. Often the gay man is not even aware of what he needs. This creates a situation in which many interpersonal needs, subsumed under sex, are likely to go unmet. This lack of awareness of his specific needs is likely to prevent these needs from being expressed in his relationships as well, possibly creating stress and frustration within these relationships. This sexualizing of needs works to inhibit intimacy and to prevent important needs from being satisfied.

In addition, the availability of sex serves to facilitate gay men's meeting in a sexual context and/or for a sexual purpose. First encounters are often sexual. This reverses Morris' (1971) twelve stages of the development of intimate relationships which culminates with sexual intimacy. The "instant" intimacy provided by initial sexual encounters is an important factor in gay male relationships. This instant intimacy often works to create anxiety because of the intensity of the initial closeness experienced by the partners. It seems that instant sexual intimacy serves to enhance rapid emotional withdrawal. Indeed, a common complaint from clients is that the men they have sex with withdraw emotionally immediately after orgasm.

Fantasy often plays an important role when initial encounters are sexual and anonymous. The role of fantasy may present problems to the development of intimate relationships. Johnston (1980) notes that

"while fantasy can be creative, more often it is destructively demanding and emotionally alienating. Too many of one's fantasy elements are imposed on others, rather than shared" (p.22). Relationships developed on the basis of initial fantasies are likely to cause problems when the individual begins to separate himself from the fantasy and asserts his individuality. This stress on fantasy also prevents the partners involved from knowing clearly who they are involved with, as the fantasy is likely to affect their perceptions.

SUMMARY AND OVERVIEW

Intimacy between gay men has been examined within the contemporary context of intimate relationships in the United States. Establishing and maintaining satisfying intimate relationships is difficult in our rapidly changing society. Traditional cultural values, conceptions and ideals regarding intimacy are being questioned and their relevance to current individual needs is being reevaluated. Consequently, the social parameters of intimate relationships are changing and unclear, creating a potential source of conflict and confusion for the individual.

The factors that facilitate and inhibit intimate relationships between gay men have also been examined within the historical context of the oppression of homosexuality in America and the emergence of a gay satellite culture in response to that oppression. Being homosexual in a homophobic society presents unique difficulties -- and

opportunities -- for the individual's intimate relationships. In order to relate intimately with one another, gay men must overcome both external constraints and internalized ambivalences. The events of the past decade have offered homosexual men the opportunity to experience a basic change in their sense of self -- an opportunity to have self-validating experiences with other gay men, to develop an integrated gay identity, as well as a crucial support network. This has served to facilitate intimacy between gay men.

Ten years, however, is a short time, and the task is a monumental one. Arising from the opportunities of homosexual men to question basic, traditional sociocultural assumptions, and inherent in the oppression of homosexuality, there is still conflict and confusion within the gay male community about the issues of sexuality and masculinity, as well as about the parameters of intimate relationships between gay men -- including friendships, romantic and/or sexual relationships. The confusion within the gay male community may engender confusion and anxiety in individual members of the community. Aspects of the gay satellite culture have offered the individual gay man relief from this anxiety and confusion through the external structure provided by a "prescribed" gay identity. That is, aspects of the gay male satellite culture function as "mechanisms of escape from freedom," and may be detrimental to the development of a creative individual gay identity, and ultimately to intimate relationships between gay men.

The centrality of sexuality in defining homosexuality dictates that sexual needs will be preeminant in self definition. Important emotional and affectional needs are seen as extentions of these sexual needs and secondary to them, encouraging the separation of sexual from affectional and emotional aspects of interpersonal interactions. This serves to maintain identity fragmentation rather than integration, and as such works against the establishment and maintenance of intimate relationships between gay men. The centrality of sexuality to the definition of homosexuality has hampered our understanding of the development of the homosexual boy. It is important to look at the nature of this developmental process with an eye toward developing a more comprehensive notion of homosexuality that could account for the gay man's needs for emotional, affectional, as well as sexual intimacy with same-sex others.

CHAPTER THREE

LIFE-SPAN DEVELOPMENTAL FACTORS AND INTIMACY

Similar to the changes in the nature of intimate relationships over the course of history, the conception and experience of intimacy and the nature of intimate relationships change over the life course of the individual. The purpose of this chapter is to explore the importance of life-span developmental factors to the individual's conception and experience of intimacy by examining the interface between homosexual and/or gay identity development and intimacy between gay men.

This topic will be examined from several perspectives. The nature of the homosexual boys' needs for emotional, affectional and sexual intimacy with other males will be explored. How these needs affect the boy's interactions with significant boys and men will be examined, as will the effects of these early same-sex intimate relationships on the boy's later same-sex intimate relationships. The crucial interplay between the development of self identity and intimate relationships will be explored with the focus on Erikson's developmental model. The importance of coming out -- a life-long developmental process involving the acquisition of a homosexual identity and the transition from a homosexual to a gay identity -- will be stressed. In addition, the debilitating effects of internalized homophobia on the development of self-identity in homosexual men -- i.e., identity confusion -- and its effects on intimacy between gay men will be examined.

OVERVIEW OF DEVELOPMENTAL FACTORS

Kimmel (1974) stressed the importance of two types of developmental changes to intimate relationships: 1) The developmental changes over the course of the individual's life span and 2) changes over the course of a particular relationship -- the developmental vector of the relationship. Understanding the developmental vector of a relationship is crucial to an understanding of the general characteristics of change over the course of intimate relationships, as well as to understanding any particular relationship at any point in time. Psychological research has rarely studied relationships over time. Instead, it has explored the developmental changes in relationships over time by examining different stages of relationships, at different points in time, under different circumstances, with different subjects. There is a great need for more longitudinal study of relationships over time. While recognizing the importance of the developmental vector of relationships for understanding intimate relationships, that focus is beyond the scope of the present study. Thus, the primary focus of this chapter will be on how develpmental changes over the life course of the individual affect the conception of intimacy and the nature of intimate relationships.

Several important issues emerge from the social science literature regarding the connection between life-span developmental factors and intimacy. First, the importance of life-span developmental factors to

the individual's conception and experience of intimacy is clear. The social and ego developmental level of the individual affects, and is affected by, his intimate relationships. Second, the nature of intimate friendships changes over the life cycle based on the needs of that particular stage of life. Third, an understanding of individuals' unique experiences with intimate relationships over the course of their lives is crucial to understanding their phenomenological conception of intimacy and the nature of their intimate relationships. Fourth, the gender of the individual interacts with developmental factors to produce sex differences in the capacity for and experience with intimate relationships. As compared to women, men are consistently found to have less training for, experience with, and to place less value on, intimate relationships. This seems to be true at all developmental levels, despite Sullivan's (1953) emphasis on the importance of intimate chumships for pre-adolescent boys. Fifth, self identity develops as a result of interpersonal, and especially intimate, interaction over the life course. In turn, self identity affects the individual's intimate experiences.

Erikson's Developmental Model - The Interface Between Identity and Intimacy

The crucial interface between intimacy and the development of individual identity is directly explored by Erikson (1968, 1976). He

outlines the existence of eight developmental stages over the life-course. Based on the epigenetic principle, he postulates that each life stage becomes a "crisis" -- i.e., a crucial period of heightened potential and increased vulnerability -- when each combination of conflicting "primal qualities" predominant at that life-stage, rise to ascendance because of a combination of physical, cognitive, emotional and social developmental factors. He presents a psychosocial scheme in which he postulates, for each life stage, a dialectic interplay between these primal qualities from which emerges, under favorable personal and cultural conditions, a new "vital strength." This vital strength could not emerge without experiencing both of the contending qualities. Yet, for assured growth, the quality more intent on adaptation -- the syntonic -- must predominate over the dystonic. For example, he does not postulate a victory of intimacy over isolation, but a dynamic balance in favor of intimacy.

Each of the earlier developmental conflicts is renewed on each subsequent level, but is always renewed in terms of the conflict dominant at that level. Erikson points out that no individual is located at any one stage. He believes that all persons oscillate between at least two stages, and move to a higher one only when an even higher one begins to influence the interplay.

As Kimmel (1974) points out, two stages are crucial for an understanding of Erikson's concept of intimacy -- adolescence and young adulthood. The identity crisis of adolescence is pivotal. The dialectic struggle at this stage is between identity and identity

confusion. The resulting vital strength of this struggle is fidelity: "The ability to sustain loyalties freely pledged in spite of the inevitable contradictions and confusions of value systems" (1976, p.25).

Erikson feels that only when the sense of identity and the concomitant strength of fidelity are firmly developed is true and mutual psychosocial intimacy with another person possible. He defines true intimacy as "a counterpointing as well as a fusing of identities" (1968, p.135) which may occur in friendships, erotic encounters or in "joint inspiration."

The crisis of Intimacy versus Isolation occurs in young adulthood. The vital strength resulting from this crisis is mature love: mutual devotion. When love is not accomplished through intimate relationships, the individual may retain a deep sense of isolation with either no relationships, promiscuous relationships without true fusion, or few highly stereotyped interpersonal relationships.

While intellectually, clinically, and theoretically, Erikson's concepts are clear, his definition of intimacy is vague, as is his discussion of the interplay of intimacy and love. Lowenthal and Weiss (1976) support this contention. They point out that the role of intimacy within Erikson's developmental model has been difficult to define succinctly. True intimacy as "a counterpointing as well as a fusing of identities" (Erikson, 1968, p.135) is not a very clear definition. It seems that at times, the terms "mutuality," "fusion,"

and "true engagement" are used by Erikson interchangeably with intimacy. Mature love is said to arise from the Crisis of Intimacy versus Isolation, and at the same time "it pervades the intimacy of individuals" (1976, p.24). Erikson describes the young adult stage as a time "when being 'in love' must mature into Love and when 'intimacies' must amount to a pervasive sense of, and capacity for, intimacy" (1976, p.25).

Although there is some difference of opinion regarding the exact nature of the relationship, Erikson's theoretical formulations regarding the interface between intimacy and identity have received wide acceptance and support -- despite his definitional vagueness.

Of particular interest is Kimmel's (1974) synthesis of Erikson's developmental perspective and the Symbolic Interactionist framework in examining the intimate relationships of adulthood. Kimmel sees the task of the identity stage of adolescence as a process in which the *I* succeeds in bringing a sense of continuity, consistency and wholeness to the mass of *me*'s responded to by others in social interaction. Relationships during the identity stage -- transitional relationships -- are seen as attempts to perceive, understand, and integrate oneself more clearly through taking the role of the other. Once, however, a clear sense of self (i.e., identity) has developed, one may take the role of the other for a better understanding of the other and how he views his world -- "to know and sense (with one's *I*) the uniqueness of the other as a social self (their *me*'s) and, perhaps catch a fleeting glimpse of their *I* at work in its spontaneity and creativity" (p.112).

Kilpatrick (1975) also offers support for Erikson's notion of the relationship between individual identity and intimacy. He believes that mature love, or true intimacy, requires commitment. Commitment, in turn, requires a developed sense of individual identity, that is stable, lasting, and capable of sustained fidelity.

The exact nature of the interface between identity development and intimacy is not, however, agreed upon. Lowenthal and Weiss (1976) suggest the need for a more flexible life stage theory than the one postulated by Erikson. They offer several reasons for this needed flexibility: 1) there may be other and/or more relevant developmental tasks than those presented by Erikson; 2) there may be cultural and socioeconomic differences in developmental tasks and paths; 3) within each socioeconomic group within each culture, men and women will have different developmental paths; and 4) they suggest that the individual simultaneously deals with several developmental tasks, which periodically wax and wane, with different rhythms, and possibly rythmic conflict, between the sexes.

Their points are well taken. A more flexible approach than that postulated by Erikson certainly seems in order. This is especially true with regards to the interface between identity and intimacy. Both the development and consolidation of self-identity, and the defining and sharing of that self in significant intimate relationships may be viewed as processes that continue over the life course. The relationship between identity and intimacy may be viewed as reciprocal. Identity is formed, developed, consolidated and

changed partly through intimate relationships with significant others. This growing and changing sense of self in turn affects the capacity for intimacy and how individuals conceive of, experience, feel, and behave in their intimate relationships.

The process begins at birth with early experiences with the mothering one and continues with the child's expanding interactions, over time, with the father, siblings, extended family, teachers, schoolmates and friends. As children interact with, and differentiate themselves from, these significant others, they learn both about themselves and about interacting socially and intimately with others. All significant intimate relationships over the life course offer the opportunity for change and/or growth in learning about both oneself and about intimacy. It must be noted that although the interplay between identity and intimacy is a lifelong process, there is of course the possibility of difficulties or stagnation anywhere during the life course. For example, one may choose not to interact intimately with another person, and thus may miss out on valuable feedback about oneself; or one may choose not to integrate new information, learned about oneself through intimate relations, into the self-concept.

Erikson speaks of the need to consolidate the sense of identity and the strength of fidelty, before true and mutual psychosocial intimacy with another person is possible. It is possible to conceive of a continually evolving view of intimate relationships over the life course. Fromm's (1956) idea that being loved preceeds the capacity to

love, may instead be an early, and certainly continually important, aspect of intimacy. Some individuals may retain this view of the nature of intimacy throughout their lives and may even successfully set up their lives to satisfy their conceptions. It does seem that a continually more consolidated self identity would allow greater risks in intimate relationships, and freer, more spontaneous interaction. As an individual's sense of identity grows, one would expect a concomitant growth in the capacity to relate intimately with others. Risk taking and intimate sharing would seem to further clarification and/or exploration of parts of the individual's self identity.

HOMOSEXUAL DEVELOPMENT AND SAME-SEX INTIMACY

Two important foci of self definition for the individual in our society are gender and sexuality. Each is a major determinant of the individual's experience as well as central to the way in which individuals learn to define themselves. The importance of these two factors derives from the emphasis on each in our sociocultural system. In a gender differentiated and sexist society, gender will determine what opportunites and experiences are differentially available to men and women. As Foucault (1980) points out, sexuality is central to the way the individual defines himself in our society. Homosexuality is socioculturally defined as a sexual orientation determined by the individual's same-sex erotic preferences. As such, it's centrality to identity derives, in part, from the importance of sexuality for self definition in our culture. In addition, homosexuality becomes a central issue to individual identity

definition because of the homophobia and heterosexual bias of the dominant sociocultural system. The effects of being homosexual, and male, on the individual's identity, and, by extension, on his intimate relationships, will be the primary foci of the next two chapters.

Most developmental perspectives are heterosexually biased and assume the individual's heterosexuality. Childhood and adolescent same-sex friendships are viewed as transitional relationships. They are seen as preparation for, and a prelude to, heterosexual romantic relationships in adulthood. Marriage and parenthood are portrayed implicitly as moral expectations for the individual. For example, Erikson (1968) in speaking of generativity in adulthood, says "There are of course, people who, from misfortune or because of special and genuine gifts in other directions, do not apply this drive to offspring of their own, but to other forms of altruistic concern and creativity which may absorb their kind of parental drive" (p.138). Nowhere does Erikson mention the possibility of a positive, active choice to not have children. It seems that, for Erikson, only misfortune and special gifts free individuals from their moral obligation.

The developmental perspectives of Kimmel (1974, 1977, 1978, 1979) and Kilpatrick (1975), however, do not assume the individual's heterosexuality. Kilpatrick, for example, applies his understanding of Erikson's concept of generativity to "friendships and love relations of a homosexual nature." He believes that "sexual preference" should not prevent an individual from finding ties to a

society and it's future or from finding "meaning in commitment to another of the same sex" (p.194). Kilpatrick seems to understand the validity and importance of friendships and love relationships to gay men. He also seems to understand the importance of relationships between gay men to identity formation, although he does not address himself specifically to homosexual and/or gay identity development. Kilpatrick, however, seems tied to traditional heterosexual values in terms of valuing only long term, commited dyadic relationships as the goal to strive for -- be they hetero- or homosexual dyads. In addition, his use of the term "sexual preference" is reflective of society's obsession with the sexual aspect of homosexuality. Sexual preference is only one element of a gay identity -- an element too often stressed by heterosexuals and by gay men themselves.

Coming Out

The development of a homosexual and/or gay identity is part of the general process of individual identity development. However, the heterosexual bias and homophobia of the dominant sociocultural system presents unique developmental tasks to the individual male homosexual. He must deal with the fact that his need system for same-sex intimacy subjects him to social sanctions, including ostracism, ridicule, battered self-esteem, and the possibility of legal penalties if he acts to satisfy his needs. Given the interface between identity and intimacy, it is imperative to explore and understand the process by which the individual develops a homosexual and/or gay identity in order to gain a greater understanding of

intimate relationships between gay men. "Coming out" is the unique life-long developmental process through which the homosexual individual develops a homosexual and/or gay identity.

The term "coming out," however, has generally been used in the literature to refer to varied, but specific and discrete portions of this developmental process. For example, Hooker (1967) defined coming out as the individual's "debut" -- when he identifies himself publicly for the first time as a homosexual. Gagnon and Simon (1968) suggested that coming out is the point in time when the indivdual identifies himself as homosexual and begins his first exploration of the homosexual community. Dank (1971) also defined coming out as the individual's self-identification as homosexual. Lee (1977) conceived of coming out as process, but he excluded early experientation with homosexual behavior as well as being publicly identified as gay from his process-oriented definition. De Monteflores and Schultz (1978) view coming out as "the process through which gay women and men recognize their sexual preferences and choose to integrate this knowledge into their personal and social lives" (p.60). They suggest that this process "is marked by a series of milestone experiences, including awareness of same-sex attractions, first same-sex experience, coming out to friends, family, and coworkers, and coming out publicly" (p.61). They believe that coming out is a psychological growth process that entails "a complex series of cognitive and affective transformations as well as changes in behavior or actions" (p.67).

DeMonteflores & Schultz point out that different models have been proposed to organize coming out experiences. The most common model orders coming out experiences along a covert-overt (private-public) dimension -- a sequential linear progression model (Lee, 1977; O'Dowd & Hencken, 1975). This model assumes private experiences precede public coming out experiences. A related model was used by the American Psychological Association Task Force on the Status of Lesbian and Gay Male Psychologists (1979). It combined the linear progression model with a developmental chronology, and utilized average-age data.

The sequential linear progression model, however, does not account well for unique individual adaptations as well as fluctuations "back and forth in degrees of openess, depending on variety of personal, social and professional factors" (Riddle & Morin, 1977, p.28). These fluctuations might be seen as regressions in a linear model. DeMonteflores and Schultz suggest instead, conceptualizing coming out as a "feedback -- loop model" which regulates the relationship between the gay person and society. With this model, fluctuations are not viewed as regressions, rather "a gay person's actions elicit certain societal responses which affect the person's subsequent actions. For example, self-identification as gay may lead to coming out to friends whose reactions may in turn modify the person's developing sense of self" (p.62).

The feedback-loop model provides a satisfactory model to account for: unique individual coming out processes reflective of unique psychological and sociocultural circumstances, needs, and experiences;

fluctuations in the individual's coming out process; and the individual's "being out" to different extents in different context. Most importantly in the current context, it provides a model which recognizes and can account for the significance of the interplay between interpersonal, and especially intimate, relationships and homosexual and/or gay identity formation.

Early Homosexual Development

The data on male homosexual development is based entirely on retrospective reports of adult gay men collected in interviews and/or questionnaires (APA Task Force on the Status of Lesbian & Gay Male Psychologists, 1979; Dank, 1971; Jay and Young, 1979; Kimmel, 1977, 1978, 1979; Lehne, 1978; Silverstein, 1981; and Spada, 1979). These men were asked to remember experiences and feelings that occurred decades before, as well as to remember at what age they occurred. The nature and meaning of these childhood and adolescent experiences were often unclear to the boy as they were occurring. In addition, the gay men view their experiences retroactively through years of learning and relearning about homosexuality. It is imperative to keep this in mind while examining the homosexual developmental data, since it represents a potential source of distortion of the data. Kimmel (1974) points to another issue to keep in mind when examining developmental data: "It is especially important to consider the interaction of the individual's development with the historical situation during which the developmental events took place" (p.123). This issue seems particularly relevant regarding the data on homosexual development

because of the radical social changes occurring in the gay community over the course of the last decade.

Socialization in contemporary American culture is based on the presumption of the individual's heterosexuality. Early childhood does not provide a period of "anticipatory socialization" to prepare the homosexual child to be homosexual. Therefore, as Dank (1971) points out, "the child who has sexual feelings or desires toward persons of the same sex has no vocabulary to explain to himself what these feelings mean" (p.106). Altman (1971) makes a similar point: most homosexuals "become aware of vaguely homosexual feelings before having any model to help understand them" (p.61). Consequently, the homosexual's coming out generally begins when the child "realizes," "discovers," or "recognizes" a feeling, often vague, of "difference" from other boys. This realization is reported, by studies of homosexual development, to occur as early as four or five years of age for some boys. Some of the boys were aware of their homosexuality at such an early age, that they report, retrospectively as adults, always having known they were homosexual (Jay & Young, 1979).

The majority of respondents in these developmental studies, however, report first experiencing this feeling of "difference" during puberty and adolescence. Spada (1979) points out that "most gay men have their first homosexual feelings at the same time they have any sexual awakening at all" (p.23). Given the strength of the sex drive at puberty and during adolescence, it is not suprising that most gay men remember experiencing their sense of "difference" as sexual in

nature. As Kimmel (1978) suggests, "when, during adolescence, sexual maturation brings greater erotic awareness, it would seem that individuals begin to recognize their sexual orientation, sense their differentness if they are predominantly or exclusively gay, and begin to integrate the psychosocial meaning of their orientation into the rest of their lives and growing sense of self" (p.116). The homosexual boy's greater interest in other boys and men is experienced as different from his culturally assumed "natural" interest in girls, as well as different in intensity from his heterosexual friend's interest in other boys.

Acting on his sexual feelings for other boys is an important part of the boy's exploration of his homosexual feelings, and of his beginning to integrate his homosexuality into his life. This first same-sex sexual experience generally follows the awareness of being different by a year or two. It occurs, generally with peers, on the average between the ages of ten and sixteen.

It is important to keep in mind that investigators make assumptions about the nature of homosexuality which dictate the questions they choose to ask their respondents. The particular assumption in question here is the assumption that homosexuality is by definition a sexual orientation. Based on this assumption, investigators ask their respondents about early same-sex sexual feelings, attractions, and/or experiences. For example, Dank (1971) asked about "first same sex sexual desire" and found that for fifteen percent of his respondents it occurred before age ten, and for another

forty-six percent between the ages of ten and fourteen. The average was 13.5 years. Jay and Young (1979) asked "At what age did you first realize you were homosexual or gay or sexually different?" They found that eight percent realized their difference before eight years of age, thirty-one percent between nine and twelve years, and twenty-nine percent between thirteen and fifteen years of age. Spada (1979) asked his respondents "At what age did you first realize you were sexually attracted to members of your own sex? He found that thirty-five percent of his respondents reported their "first same sex attraction" before the age of ten, with another forty-one percent between the ages of ten and fourteen. The American Psychological Association Task Force (1979) asked at what age their respondents "became aware of first homosexual feelings, even though not labeled as such." They did not ascertain the nature of these homosexual feelings nor what they meant to the individual. The gay male psychologists were found to act on their same-sex sexual feelings (14.9 years) within an average of two years after their first same sex attraction (12.8 years) and, on the average, more than two years before they understood the meaning of "homosexual" (17.2 years.)

Responses elicted by these questions are likely to reflect the sexual aspect of the respondent's experience of his homosexuality. This is especially true when respondents have learned to share the same basic assumption about the nature of homosexuality as the investigator. Viewing their early experiences retrospectively, respondents may try to fit these experiences into categores they have

learned after the experiences occurred. Likewise, investgators are likely to interpret their data on the basis of their assumptions about the nature of homosexuality. They may try to fit their data into pre-exisitng categories -- i.e., sexual/attractions, feelings, and/or desires -- based on these assumptions. Operating under unquestioned assumptions, observers may be blinded to the meaning of differences that emerge in their data. Often, investigators miss other important aspects of their respondent's experience of their homosexuality simply because they have chosen to ask only about sexual experiences.

Indeed, despite asking about early same-sex sexual feelings, attractions and experiences, observers often have found that early feelings of "being different" were not necessarily sexual in nature. For example, Jay and Young (1979) report that "the sense of being different is the beginning" and that "the perception of this difference is not necessarily linked to sexual acts." They report that "childhood fantasy-world crushes and daydreams for some of the men often lacked a sexual element" for example, they report one respondent's fantasy about "receiving 'caring nurturance' from peers." Sometimes, the sexual feelings reported by their respondents "have a strong emotional component, and are recognized by adults and called 'crushes'" (pp.83-106). Jay and Young seem to regard the emotional feelings of the homosexual boy as a component of his sexual feelings, which they regard as predominant.

Silverstein (1981) also addresses the nature of the early feeling of difference experienced by homosexual boys vis a vis their

heterosexual friends. His data indicated that "homosexual development begins at an early age and that it is different from the heterosexual development of the straight boys who are early sexual partners. It precedes the labeling process. Nor is there sufficient cognitive development for an 'identity' of homosexual with all the expected behavior that any sexual identity demands." Commenting that "straight boys" and "gay boys" are both interested in sexual play in childhood and adolescence, he asks, then, what is the difference between "gay boys" and their straight friends? "In general, gay boys are serious about the business of physical contact in a way straight boys are not. They feel different from their friends." He goes on to explore his data regarding the nature of this difference: "Listening carefully to their stories, one realizes that a deep sense of love and commitment often accompanied sexual interest in other boys. There are many references to tender feelings toward older boys and young men, and here, too, there is a desire for closeness that is qualitatively different from what one would expect from straight boys." He concludes that the young gay boy "not only wants the sexual release but solace and affection as well" (pp.100-105). Silverstein, like Jay and Young, regards the sexual feelings as primary -- homosexual identity is viewed as a sexual identity; the emotional feelings accompany the sexual feelings.

Significant empirical data about the nonsexual nature of early homosexual fantasies is provided by Lehne (1978). He explored the relationship between gay men's early homoerotic fantasies and the

development of a gay identity. His findings are quite interesting. All but two of his forty-two respondents recalled having homoerotic fantasies (mean age was 12.2 years) prior to having their first homosexual experience (mean age was 16 years). Of those who reported specific thematic content (62% of the sample), two-thirds of their fantasies were judged- independently by two psychologists -- to be "exclusively affectional, i.e., a generalized, positive emotionally charged representation of another male" (p.32). The remaining one-third of the fantasies included specific sexual content. Lehne suggests that "since the social representation of homosexuality is primarily focused on sexual behavior, many gay men may not initially relate fantasy information about their affectional preferences to the social/sexual definition of homosexuality. . . . Thus an early self-concept based on information is probably more of an affectional preference than a sexual orientation" (p.32).

Interestingly, Lehne also examined the current sexual fantasies of his adult respondents. Fifty-eight percent of these fantasies were judged to have predominantly affectional and/or romantic themes; the remaining forty-two percent focused on specific sexual content.

Homosexuality: The Need For Same-Sex Intimacy

Most observers have defined homosexuality as a sexual orientation, preference or variation. The aim of homosexual development has been thought to be the integration of the individual's sexuality into his psychological and social life. A homosexual identity has been considered to be a sexual identity. Sexual needs have been regarded

as the primary, and indeed defining, needs of homosexual men. Important emotional and affectional needs are seen as extensions of these sexual needs, and secondary to them. Placing a negatively valued sexuality at the center of self definition with emotional needs in a secondary position, facilitates identity confusion and fragmentation rather than integration. In addition, it makes the task of gay men in meeting their needs for emotional, affectional and sexual intimacy with other men immensely more difficult because sexual needs, not emotional needs, are regarded as the primary motivation of homosexual contact. Much like the couple front bias and the biased distinction between lovers and friends, this view of homosexuality is a biased view based on assumptions and misconceptions of the homosexual experience. Support of this view maintains the sociocultural oppression of gay people as well as their internalized homophobia, and actively works against intimacy between gay men.

In addition, this view of homosexuality does not adequately deal with the empirical data on homosexual development or my clinical experience with gay men. This data indicates that many gay men do, indeed, retrospectively describe their early homosexual feelings as sexual in nature. This does not necessarily mean, however, that homosexuality is defined exclusively by sexual needs. Most boys learn early in childhood socialization to deny their emotional needs, as men, and especially, between men. It therefore seems likely that many gay men actually did not experience their homosexuality as anything but sexual. In addition, retrospective reporting could be expected to

be distorted by the tendency among gay men to sexualize many of their emotional and affectional needs as adults. However, despite learning to deny and sexualize their emotional needs, many gay men are able to recall needs for emotional and affectional intimacy with other boys and men in childhood and adolescence, often without any sexual content.

It seems unlikely that these boys had unique needs vis a vis other homosexual boys who recall only sexual feelings. It seems more likely that either the emotional needs of these boys were more intense or that these boys were more sensitive to, more aware of and/or more able to differentiate and define their needs as children. The sexual definition of homosexuality cannot adequately account for the same-sex emotional needs of these boys.

In addition, adult gay men certainly report experiencing needs for emotional and affectional intimacy with other men. When discussed in the literature, it seems as though these needs developed only in adulthood and are secondary to earlier, primary sexual needs. However, theorists like Sullivan (1953) and Fromm (1956) speak of childhood needs for emotional intimacy that precede the focus on sexual needs during puberty and adolescence. It makes sense to suggest that, perhaps, the emotional and affectional needs of homosexual boys do not first appear in adulthood, but indeed, may precede sexual needs or occur simultaneously with them. Clearly, a more comprehensive notion of homosexuality is needed to account for the gay man's needs for emotional, affectional, as well as, sexual intimacy with same-sex others.

I am postulating that sexual orientation is one aspect of a more inclusive emotional-affectional-sexual need system. Homosexuality is conceived here as a need for primary emotional, affectional and sexual intimacy with members of one's own sex; heterosexuality is a need for primary emotional, affectional and sexual intimacy with members of the opposite sex. It is probable that these needs vary along a Kinsey-type scale with exclusive homosexuality and exclusive heterosexuality the two end points of the scale, and bisexuality the middle point. If there was no sociocultural regulation of this need system, and people were not "forced" by sociocultural factors to make a choice between the two endpoints, it is suspected is that the resulting curve in the population would resemble a bell shaped normal curve, with most people falling between one standard deviation on each side of the bisexual mean. That is, most people would need and want some degree of intimate contact with both sexes. I am postulating a qualitative (same and/or opposite-sex object of need) and quantitative (Kinsey-type scale of intensity of need) difference between homosexuality and heterosexuality. There is a decreasing exclusivity and intensity of need as one moves away from either end of the scale toward the midpoint.

I am postulating that the homosexual boy has a need for primary emotional, affectional, and sexual intimacy with other boys and men. Contrary to popular and professional belief, I consider the emotional component of this need system to be primary, with the sexual component an important, but secondary aspect. It is hypothesized that

homosexual boys experience these needs, on some level, during childhood, and begin to respond to them in some way. The young boy, however generally does not perceive the nature of these needs clearly, and instead experiences a vague feeling of being "different" from other boys, from his male siblings, and from his father. Because the young child does not have the cognitive capacity to experience the various components of this need system differentially, the nature of this "difference" is generally unclear to the boy, especially if it is experienced early in childhood.

A multitude of factors determine the intensity of the child's needs, his awareness of his needs, and his methods of attempting to satisfy these needs. For example, children vary in the intensity of their needs for intimate contact with others, with some children experiencing stronger, more persistent needs than others. Children also vary in the extent to which they are intospective and thus sensitive to, or aware of their needs and feelings. In addition, the responses received from other boys and men to the child's attempts to satisfy his needs will vary. These factors will likely affect the child's perception of his needs and therefore of his "difference."

Early Same-Sex Intimacy

The Father/Son Relationship

The first object of the child's need for same-sex intimacy, however vaguely he experiences his needs, is likely to be a significant older male, most probably his father. It is entirely

possible that early needs are focused on other family members -- a grandfather, brother, uncle, cousin -- or close non-familial males -- a close family friend -- in addition to, or instead of, the boy's father. This is obviously true if the father is physically absent from the family. Multiple objects of need satisfaction offer the child the opportunity for multiple and hopefully different responses to his needs.

In search of pathogenic factors in the etiology of homosexuality, Beiber (1962) examined the family system of homosexual clients. He found a "profound interpersonal disturbance" between the father and his homosexual son. As a group, the fathers of homosexual boys were found to be detached, hostile, minimizing, and openly rejecting. The father's failure to meet the son's need for affection, was thought, by Beiber, to create a pathogenic need in the son for homosexual contact with other men. While many homosexual boys do have unsatisfactory relationships with their fathers, it is postulated that the unsatisfactory nature of the father/son relationship does not create the homosexual need but, instead, is the result of it. Further, the nature of the father/son relationship affects the nature of the son's future same-sex intimate relationships.

Support for this view is offered by Silverstein (1981). He rejects the notion of etiological factors in homosexuality since etiology "implies a disorder" and he does not view homosexuality as a disorder. I agree. Silverstein focuses on the importance of the father/son relationship in homosexual development. His data indicate

that "the most frightening feature of childhood for many gays was the distance between them and their fathers, and the feeling that resolution of the conflict was, and is, hopeless" (p.25). Silverstein believes that the gulf between the father and son occurs because the homosexual son consistently rejects the father's beliefs and values -- specifically, the father's "masculine values." The homosexual boy's interests and behavior are seen to conflict with the father's image of masculinity, thus creating tension. "Ultimately, the father feels rejected, believing that his son has abandoned him and turned to others (often to the mother) for support and training, he begins to fear the son and to feel alienated from him, then guilty for resenting his own child. What is revealing here is that the feelings of both father and son are identical: each feels the other as hostile, distant and unloving" (p.25).

Silverstein seems to imply that the child has established a relatively clear and stable system of beliefs and values about masculinity at a young age. Moreover, he appears to assume that most homosexual boys share similar values and beliefs that reject traditional notions of masculinity. Silverstein does not explain, however, how these nontraditional notions of masculinity develop, nor how they come to be shared by most homosexual boys so early in life. He seems to imply that these nontraditional values are somehow inherent to homosexuality, but he does not address the issue directly.

While I disagree with Silverstein about the reasons for the gulf between the father and his homosexual son, he does make several

important points. He presents data verifying the occurance of a conflictual relationship between many homosexual sons and their fathers. He underlines the importance of the father/son relationship to the development of the homosexual boy. He stresses the importance of the dynamics of the father/son relationship to the child's love relationships with other men later in life. And most importantly, he focuses on the importance of the interaction between the father and his son. He points to the active role the homosexual boy has in his relationship with his father. He is not just a passive victim of his father's rejection, as Beiber and many gay men would have us believe, rather the father/son relationship is mutually rejecting and alienating, distant and hurtful, while at the same time both father and son want respect, approval and love from the other.

A more comprehensive explanation is needed as to how the conflictual father/son relationship results from the homosexual boy's need for same-sex intimacy and his father's discomfort with same-sex intimacy. Perhaps the boy does not directly reject the father's masculine values but instead unknowingly violates the rules governing same-sex intimate contact.

Early life experiences with significant older males teach the child the rules about men interacting with other men. Most men in our culture have been trained to be emotionally witholding and uncomfortable with intimate interaction, especially with other males. It would be expected therefore, that most men would be uncomfortable with direct expressions of the homosexual child's needs for same-sex

intimacy. They would likely respond to the boy on the basis of their discomfort. The boy's needs for physical affection and emotional closeness with his father -- which probably appear more intense than his heterosexual sons's needs -- are likely met with anxious and confused responses from a father wanting to show his closeness to his son through sociable tasks and activities. It is not suprising that, because of this fear, discomfort and ambivalence, the boy's father may be ambivalent and/or arbitrary in his emotional responses to his son; or he may withdraw from his son; or he may be actively hostile to, and rejecting of his son. Unfortunately, it is less likely that the homosexual child will have his needs met with warmth, acceptance and love from a nontraditional father comfortable with his own emotionality and needs for intimacy.

To the extent that the child is aware of and seeks to satisfy his homosexual needs for same-sex intimacy, has begun to learn of the social sanctions against these needs, and has received negative or ambivalent responses to his attempts to satisfy his needs, several things are likely to occur.

Most importantly, the boy is likely to become more uncomfortable in his interactions with other, and especially with significant, males. He is likely to develop a heightened sense of vulnerability in his same-sex interactions. He will likely develop a heightened sensitivity to rejection from other males, and concomitantly, a more intense need for acceptance from them. This heightened sense of vulnerability is certain to affect the boy's ongoing same-sex

relationships with older men, his relationships with other boys during childhood and adolescence, and his adult intimate relationships with other men. The child will likely respond ambivalently in his same-sex interactions. His needs for same-sex intimate contact are strong and motivate him to seek same-sex intimacy; at the same time his growing, but vague, sense of discomfort with his needs, his growing awareness of social sanctions against same-sex intimacy, his growing feeling of vulnerability and sensitivity to rejection, and his desire to avoid uncomfortable responses from others, are likely to motivate him to withdraw from same-sex contact. Thus, the boy's responses to same-sex others, like his father, are likely to be based on his growing anxiety and ambivalence. In his interactions with his father, he is likely to feel, like his father, confused, hurt, disappointed, abandoned, unloved, fearful, angry and guilty. While wanting and needing love, approval, respect and closeness, his relationship with his father is, instead, likely to become more distant, withdrawn, alienated, rejecting and angry.

Second, the boy is likely to begin to experience, or increase his experience of, a vague sense of being different from other males. Although the feeling is vague, he senses that it occurs through his interactions with other males. His growing sense of self is likely to be affected by these same-sex interactions. This vague sense of difference is likely to feed a sense within the boy, that something is wrong with him -- his being; a sense that he is somehow unworthy of the love he seeks from his father. He is likely to confuse doing

something "bad" -- in our culture this is trying to obtain needed same-sex intimacy -- with "being bad." Clearly this negative self image is likely to affect the boy's current as well as his future same-sex relationships.

Finally, the homosexual boy is likely to try to deny or suppress his needs for emotional and affectional same-sex intimacy. This will likely occur so that the boy can try to avoid the anxiety now engendered by his needs, as well as the social sanctions and the negative responses of significant other men. Perhaps, the feelings the homosexual boy most commonly experiences in trying to deal with his needs are confusion about his vague sense of being different and ambivalence in his same-sex interactions.

Relations With Peers

Important same-sex interactions for the homosexual boy during childhood and adolescence are likely to occur with his peers. It is expected that the boy's needs for same-sex intimacy and acceptance, as well as his heightened vulnerability and sensitivity to rejection would be operative with boys as they had been with men. These feelings are likely to be compounded by the stress on competition and comparison in boy's sports and games. These aspects of athletics are potential sources of anxiety and rejection for all boys. However, because homosexual boys are likely to be more sensitive to these feelings, athletics are likely to be more threatening to them. An additional source of threat for the homosexual boy derives from an increased awareness of the needs and feelings he is trying to hide and

control in the usually all male environment of schoolyard athletics. The boy has several options available to him. First, he may become competitive and athletic and become "one of the boys" in order to be as close to them as he can. These boys are probably not very aware of their homosexual needs and therefore probably have had fewer negative responses from significant males. Their vague needs for same-sex intimacy, which may be less intense and less threatening than those of other homosexual boys, are likely to be satisfied in this diffuse atmosphere of same-sex camraderie.

A second option for the homosexual boy, which I expect is somewhat more commonly chosen that the first, is to withdraw from most contact with other boys. He may choose to remain solitary or interact mainly with girls. Several factors, operating alone or in combination, may lead the boy to choose this option. He might experience his needs and feelings intensely and fear losing control of the feelings he is trying to keep hidden or suppressed. Also, a negative self image may work to keep the boy self-protective and away from chumships. If his needs arouse intense anxiety he may avoid same-sex interaction to minimize the anxiety and confusion. He may try to avoid the continued negative reactions he anticipates. Thus, the boy may keep himself from risking rejection by rejecting other males first. He loses the opportunity for important experiences in self definition available through chumships, because of the fears he has learned early in his life about the implications of his "difference." It is possible that these men would continue patterns of isolation and avoidance of same-sex intimate relationships throughout life.

Chumships. A third option is probably the most common among homosexual boys. The boy may develop one or a few close friendships (chumships) with other boys. This may represent a relatively safe way for the child to explore all aspects of his still vague homosexual feelings -- which have probably not yet been labeled or recognized as such. It may be that chumships are more common among and/or have more meaning to homosexual boys than they do to heterosexual boys who may be more interested in, and attracted to, the task and activity orientation of peer groups -- i.e., gangs or sociable groups of school yard friends.

It is suspected that those homosexual boys who choose to develop chumships as the arena to explore their homosexual feelings will likely be somewhere between those boys who choose the other two options in the awareness and intensity of their needs, their discomfort with these needs, and the quality of the responses they have encountered in their previous interactions with other males. They may be conflicted and confused about their needs and the sanctions against them, and are seeking ways to clarify the confusion through the exploration of their same-sex feelings in their chumships.

Sullivan (1953) postulated that the beginning of preadolescence is marked by the appearance of the need for an intimate relationship with a particular member of the same sex. This usually occurs somewhere between the ages of eight-and-a-half and ten, and is considered to be a normal phase of development for a period of two-and-one-half to three-and-one-half years. Sullivan postulated that this same-sex

friendship -- or chumship -- offers the individual his first opportunity for, and experience with, intimacy. Through this relationship, the child begins to develop a real sensitivity to what matters to another person and to contribute to the happiness, support, prestige and self-esteem of the chum, who becomes of practically equal importance to the child as he himself. Often these "two groups" tend to interlock and are integrated into the preadolescent gang. But for Sullivan, the intimate two-group is more important developmentally than the gang.

Like Erikson, Sullivan sees an important connection between the development of self and the individual's intimate relations. To Sullivan, the self-system is an organization of educative experience primarily directed toward avoiding or minimizing anxiety in connection with the pursuit of need satisfaction, and with protecting self-esteem. The self-system arises purely out of interpersonal experience. The early personifications of the self-system -- good-me; bad-me and not-me -- are the result of interpersonal interaction with the mothering one who rewards with tenderness or induces anxiety. The self-system first becomes apparent late in infancy, but can undergo distinct changes in each of the developmental stages. The chumship offers the boy the opportunity to explore and define aspects of the self. Therefore, as Sullivan pointed out, one important function of the chumship is the possibility of correcting autistic or fantastic ideas about oneself by seeing oneself through the eyes of the chum. Negative reactions by the chum to attempts by the homosexual boy to

sexualize the chumship may have a significant effect on reinforcing and maintaining a negative self image already inculcated through the child's interactions with his father and with a homophobic society. Positive chumship experiences, whether sexualized or not, might have a profound positive effect on the boy's self image, and help him feel more comfortable with his same-sex feelings and interactions.

It is most likely that is is with his chums that the homosexual boy begins to explore the sexual component of his homosexual needs. While the boy is taught, and soon learns, the negative value placed on emotional and affectional interaction between men, he is also taught that sexuality is an important aspect of his masculinity. Males are encouraged to be sexual, and sexual play between boys during late childhood, puberty, and early adolescence is generally accepted among the boys. Initially, "for boys (gay or straight) early sex play seems perfectly 'natural' -- just another game to while away the time" (Silverstein, 1981, p.101). Soon, however, the boys perceive adult disapproval of their sex play and learn of social sanctions against same-sex sexual behavior. At this point the heterosexual boy usually wants the sex play to stop. But, the sexual play has significance for the homosexual boy beyond the purpose of playful experimentation it serves for his heterosexual playmate. Learning of the social sanctions against same-sex sexual play, the homosexual boy is more conflicted than his heterosexual playmate -- he wants and needs the intimacy he is told is wrong and should be stopped.

It is most likely at this point that the homosexual boy first and/or most clearly and directly experiences his "difference" from heterosexual boys, and he is likely to experience this "difference" as sexual in nature. This accords with the data that indicate that the boy experiences his first homosexual feelings as a sexual attraction to other males at around the time of puberty. It is not suprising that the boy experiences his homosexuality as sexual in nature given: the strength and primacy of the sexual drive during puberty and adolescence; the centrality of sex to identity definition in our culture and, as Erikson points out, identity formation is the central task of adolescence; the centrality of sex, but not emotion and affection, to male sex-role identity, which teaches boys to be sexual but not emotional; and, the experience of this "difference" with heterosexual boys over the continuation of sexual play.

It is important to point out that these early same-sex experiences, like early fantiasies, may not be exclusively sexual experiences to the homosexual boy. Lehne's (1978) respondent's early same-sex sexual experiences were consistent with their early affectional fantasies. Most reported having had their first same-sex sexual experience with a friend, or group of friends -- usually peers -- whom they had known for years prior to the sexual experience. First same-sex sexual experiences seem to have grown out of early affectional bonds, and, in addition, were evaluated by the respondents with reference to their affectional context. Lehne concludes that "this evidence suggest that early homoerotic fantasies provide

information to gay men which is used in realizing their affectional preference. These fantasies precede sexual experiences, and may influence gay men to have affectional/sexual relationships with friends and to evaluate these experiences in an affectional context. After this early self-concept development, gay men may attempt to understand themselves within the social definitions of homosexuality" (p.33).

Silverstein (1981) also presents data to support this contention: "Most men can remember special friends in their early sexual years, as well as the wish to develop sexual and emotional relationships with them " (p.98). He describes the relationships typical of many of his respondents who fell in love with another boy or man during early childhood: "The general pattern of these young affairs seems to be a period of emotional and sexual intensity, terminated abuptly because of parental interference or the fears of one of the partners about the newly discovered label of 'homosexual.' As a result, young lovers almost always learn early about emotional loss" (p.92). Silverstein believes that this rejection by a "loving friend" is quite important developmentally to the gay boy, as it is "the moment when the gay boy is most apt to feel that there is something wrong with him, some flaw in his character" (p.105). It seems as if the rejection may crystalize the vague feeling of "difference" which had been slowly emerging in the child as has just been suggested.

Effects of Early Same-Sex Intimacy On Later Relationships

It can be seen that early, and life long, same-sex intimate relationships are likely to have a profound effect on the individual's self-esteem and sense of identity, as well as on the same-sex intimate relationships of the adolescent and adult gay male. Sullivan (1953) addressed this last issue. Based on his clinical experience, he postulated that for satisfactory relations with other men in adulthood, it is required that boys had a profitable relationship with a same-sex chum during pre-adolescence. When there has been no such opportunity or experience, these men are vigilant, uncomfortable, tense and uncertain of what the other thinks of them in their adult ineractions with other men (p.248). Sullivan is speaking here of carrying on the conventional business of life with members of one's own sex, not of same-sex intimate relationships. One can hypothesize that, if everyday business is affected by early chumships, then same-sex intimate relationships, in which the individual is more vulnerable, would be even more affected by early same-sex experiences. One of the central theses of Silverstein's (1981) book is that: "our childhood experiences with love and sex profoundly affect our lives as adult male lovers" (p.72). I agree with his point fully.

Silverstein provides the most direct discussion of the effects of early same-sex experiences on later same-sex intimate relationships. In addition to learning early about emotional loss through the abrupt breakup of their "loving friendship," "boys who have had affairs with

other boys find love in adulthood easily; they also appear to be less emphatic about sexual demands on a lover, tending to place the quality of the relationship above sexual perfection" (p.91). Silverstein sees early love affairs as a distinct advantage for the boy who can "understand the power and joy of emotional and sexual compatibility" (p.91).

It is suggested here that the homosexual's relationships with significant males at any point in the life course -- not just pre-adolescent chumships -- may have a significant effect on later same-sex intimate relationships. This is especially true regarding the boy's early relationship with his father.

Silverstein points out that the dynamics of the father/son relationship are a crucial factor in the type of man a gay man will seek and choose as a lover. In addition, the dynamics of the father/son relationship affect the nature of the interaction between a gay man and his lover. Silverstein postulates a "phantom father" that acts to interfere in gay love relationships. Many gay men, with unresolved conflicting feelings toward their fathers, choose lovers in order to indirectly work out their unfinished business with their fathers. They expect their lover to fulfill dual roles. Still angry and resentful toward their father, they distort their perceptions of themselves and their lover. They then act toward their lover on the basis of these distorted transferential expectations and perceptions. He outlines several common transferential patterns: the gay man turns his lover into his father and expects him to make up for his father's

deficiencies; the gay man attributes the motivation he attributed to his father to his lover and responds to him like a hurt child; and/or the gay man acts as a father to his lover, and treats him in ways he wishes his father had acted toward him, thus turning the lover into himself.

Given the suppression of intimacy between men, as well as the fear of homosexuality, a conflictual relationship between a homosexual boy and his father is certainly encouraged by the current sociocultural context. The problem is compounded in an adult relationship because each of the partners may be reacting transferentially to the other. Placing unclear and unreasonable expectations on a lover creates confusion and distance. Reacting to him on the basis of distorted preceptions prevents the actual assets and liabilities of the lover from being realistically assesed. To the extent that these transferential reactions occur, they interfere with intimacy between gay men.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF A HOMOSEXUAL IDENTITY

The developmental data indicate that awareness of homosexual needs and acting on the sexual component of those needs preceeds the process of labeling oneself as homosexual (APA Task Force, 1979; Dank, 1971; De Monteflores & Shultz, 1978; Silverstein, 1981). As Dank (1971) points out, to have homosexual feelings and to engage in homosexual behavior does not mean that the individual identifies himself as homosexual. Dank reported a six year interval between the time of the

first same-sex sexual feelings and experiences (13.5 years of age) and the age at which the decision was made that one was homosexual (19.3 years of age). The gay male psychologists considered themselves to be homosexual, on the average, at age 21 years -- about eight years after first becoming aware of homosexual feelings. It is during this interval that the individual develops a homosexual identity.

The process of attempting to integrate his homosexuality into his psychosocial life, and understanding the implications of his being homosexual in a homophobic society, is usually a painful and difficult task for the male child, adolescent and/or adult. As the nature of his "difference" becomes clearer, the homosexual boy learns not only that one is not supposed to be emotionally, affectionately, and sexually intimate with other males, but he learns that to want to do, or be, so is "sick," "immoral," "perverted," "sinful," and "criminal"; and that those who do want this type of contact are "queers," "fairies," "degenerates," "faggots," and "sissies." The child learns that something is wrong with him because of what he needs, feels, wants, and does.[7]

Guilt, shame, disgrace, regret, anxiety, conflict and self- hatred are the responses most often mentioned in the literature to the individual's gradual realization of his homosexuality and his understanding of the negative social value placed on it, and by extension on him, in our homophobic society. Spada (1979) reports that most of the men his sample "experienced guilt, self-hatred and alienation when they became aware of society's disapproval of

homosexuality" (p.27). Kimmel (1978) points out that "homosexuals are likely to feel guilt, anxiety, or conflicts about their sexual orientation in addition to whatever reactions they may have to their sexuality *per se*" (p.117).

Internalized Homophobia

Perhaps the most significant effect of homophobia occurs when it is internalized by the individual and affects his self-esteem and sense of identity. Altman (1971) points out that "from society's refusal to acknowledge homosexuality as a valid part of the human experience stems the most destructive aspect of oppression, the fact that it becomes internalized and affects the self image of the oppressed" (p.61). Levine (1979) states that "Perhaps homophobia's most noxious effect is on gay self concept. Accepting societal attitudes, many gay men regard their sexuality with a mixture of repugnance, shame, and guilt. Homosexuality makes them feel inferior and unhealthy" (p.4).

The issue of the homosexual's self-hatred, his feelings of worthlessness and inadequacy, and his low self-esteem has important implications for identity formation and for the homosexual's intimate relationships. Growing up in a homophobic society, homosexual men, because of their "difference," are repeatedly confronted with the possibility of actual or potential rejection, narcissistic injury and battered self-esteem. This occurs through their interactions with signficant others and with a generally hostile environment which ridicules and ostracizes homosexual men. This repeated rejection and

narcissistic injury -- i.e., injury to self-esteem -- may lead to feelings of lowered self-esteem, a sense that one is unloveable and undeserving of love, and a compensatory, compulsive need for acceptance and approval from others. This often appears as heightened narcissism -- a need to repeatedly prove that the individual is allright in other people's eyes.

Mass (1980) comments on the issue of narcissism in gay men: "Many homosexuals are obligatory narcissists. Deprived of role models, of social structuring, or identity, constantly ridiculed, threatened, punished, and endangered for natural sexual instincts, homosexuals have been completely excluded (not unlike women) from honest participation in the patriarchal societies they have lived in for almost two milleniums. The 'narcissistic' self-absorpotion that so many homosexuals exhibit may actually be among the most extraordinary examples of human adaptability in the face of adversity, in the absense of alternatives, that nature has ever demonstrated" (p.17). His point is well taken. The narcissism of gay men must be viewed in the context of the repeated narcissistic injury to which they are subject. This narcissism represents an over compensation for the repeated injury to the ego incurred in a homophobic environment, because of feelings, needs and desires which seem "natural" to the individual. As such it represents a healthy, adaptive response to an unhealthy environment. The homosexual man who is constantly seeking narcissistic feeding -- acceptance and approval from others -- is actively attempting to reduce the cognitive dissonance engendered by

his basic sense of worth, on the one hand, and the message from others and from the environment that he is unworthy, on the other. This active attempt to deal with this conflict seems to represent a more creative and adaptive response to a conflictual situation than the response of those men who have passively accepted and internalized the homophobic societal view of their homosexuality.

Another aspect of this need for acceptance and approval by others, engendered by repeated narcissistic injury, is commonly seen most clearly among clients. This is a need to please others in interpersonal relationships. It is often manifest by a need to control -- either one's own behavior or the other person's behavior -- in order to either avoid the other's displeasure, rejection or anger, or to get the other person to respond favorably. To those who have given others the power to determine their self-image and feelings of self-esteem, this represents an attempt to prevent further narcissistic injury and protect themselves from hurt. However, this "technique" is rarely successful and generally ends in an angry power struggle for control. This is especially true between two men who have both been taught to control and dominate their feelings, their environment, and other men.

Internalized homophobia affects same-sex intimate relationships in another significant way. It often results in ambivalence toward other gay men -- fear, anxiety, dislike, contempt and avoidance of the desired and idealized other man. Hoffman (1968), pointing out that social forces communicate to the gay man that his homosexual behavior

is morally wrong and degrading, asks: "How then is he expected to develop a warm intimate relationship with a partner who he unconsciously devalues as a person for engaging in acts with him which he defines as degraded?" (p.177). Altman (1971) agrees, and points out that "Because society's attitudes are internalized, homosexuals develop a great sense of guilt about themselves. . . . Guilt, in turn, produces self-hatred, and those who hate themselves will find it difficult not to despise others who share guilt" (p.61).

Development of A Homosexual Identity: Other Issues

Four further issues -- all derived from being homosexual in a homophobic society -- are central to understanding the development of a homosexual identity as well as the nature of intimate relationships between gay men. First, homosexual boys often grow up feeling excluded, isolated and alone. Many homosexuals report having felt like they were the only ones in the world who were "different." This was probably more true before the expansion of mass media communication about homosexuality and the availability of literature which viewed homosexuality from a positive perspective. It is probably still true in areas where there is no visible gay community, and little positive literature and few role models are available[8]. Altman (1971) points out that "the sense of isolation and being excluded which, I have suggested, many homosexuals feel as children, may remain an obstable to the development of full relationships in later life" (p.62). Often, this can result in an exaggerated fear of

being alone or excluded, or perhaps, as a reaction to this fear, an exaggerated sense of independence and autonomy, which may be fostered by male socialization.

In the face of the overwhelming heterosexual majority, the homosexual commonly experiences feelings of powerlessness and helplessness. Often these feelings result from attempts to control, contain, suppress, deny or change unwanted, anxiety-provoking homosexual feelings. These attempts are usually only partially successful for limited periods of time. Often, the homosexual boy feels powerless and helpless to satisfy his homosexual needs. This may result from a fear of the consequences of acting on his needs, or perhaps, from the lack of availability of willing boys. This may also result when the individual, only minimally aware of his needs for same-sex emotional and affectional intimacy, sexualizes these aspects of his need system. Fulfilling only the sexual aspect of his needs may leave the boy feeling unsatified and helpless to fulfill those needs for emotional and affectional intimacy of which he is only vaguely aware, but still feels. These feelings of powerlessness and helplessness often remain a residual in adulthood, and issues of victimization, passivity and assertiveness are often important therapeutic issues for gay men. An important related therapeutic issue revolves around the need for the individual gay man to develop the ability to more clearly differeniate his needs, in order to enable him to more adequately seek to satisfy those needs.

The third important issue revolves around the compartmentalization and fragmentation of life common among homosexual men. Dividing life between the heterosexual and homosexual works against the integration of psychosocial identity, and supports identity fragmentation and confusion. Kimmel (1979) points out that on the basis of a perception of their heightened vulnerability -- "because being gay subjects them to special threats of exposure, loss of job, social stigma, arrest or physical violence" -- and on the basis of the internalization of sociocultural homophobia, homosexual men may often develop a pattern of "secrecy, hiding, lying, covering-up and leading a double life" (pp.151-152). Clearly such a pattern would complicate the individual's interpersonal relationships and inhibit the development of relationships with both gay and non-gay persons.

A fear concomitant with this dual life-style centers around being found out, discovered or exposed. An important source of conflict and resentment for gay couples often revolves around the extent to which a partner is excluded from his partner's activities relating to his family, friends or job. This becomes a problem because the partner, leading a double life, is not open about his homosexuality and his lover relationship in these contexts. The lover often feels excluded and negated.

In addition, if this pattern of lying, hiding, and covering-up, to protect oneself and avoid the negative consequences <u>vis a vis</u> others, is legitimized and accepted with those outside the relationship, it may be extended to the relationship between the partners. This is

especially likely to be an accepted pattern concerning outside sexual activities and relationships. The couple's acceptance of this pattern supports fragmentation and compartmentalization, reinforces the perception of danger in sharing and honesty, avoids the risk-taking involved in sharing sensitve, personal information with a partner, and thus, works to maintain distance rather than intimacy between partners. The clinician's task with his clients would seem to be to help the individual work toward the integration of his homosexuality into his psychological and social life. With a couple, the clinician may help to support risk-taking, self-disclosures, and intimate sharing between the partners.

The fourth factor is the anger at years of oppression, suppression, hiding, fear, anxiety and pain. The individual -- as well as the gay community -- needs to recognize this rage and come to terms with it. This is important for the clinician to realize in his work with gay men. For those homosexual men who do not realize their oppression -- often because they have been able to lead a successful heterosexual-based lifestyle, while selectively partaking of the gay community, "despite" their hidden homosexuality -- the anger remains beneath the surface and out of the individual's awareness. It may be directed inward resulting in depression, or, irrationally toward a partner creating conflict and confusion. Frequently, the anger is directed toward openly gay men, gay political activists and/or movement groups, who are seen as threatening because they are "rocking the boat." This anger is, I suspect, also a major contributing factor

to the internal fighting that characterizes many gay movement and service organizations, as well as to the political battles often waged between competing factions of the gay community. This anger may be directed at other gays, much like blacks burn down their own neighborhoods when the rage at their oppression explodes into violence. How much more constructive it would be it if could be directed where it belongs.

Homosexual Identity As Identity Confusion

Erikson postulates that the dialectic struggle of adolescence is between identity and identity confusion. As can be seen from the developmental data, the period of adolescence for the homosexual boy is a period of discovery — both of his homosexuality and of the negative social sanctions against it -- as well as a period of conflict and confusion as he attempts to integrate his "difference" into his psychological and social life. Because society has made his homosexuality an issue and defined it as a problem, he is "forced" to focus excessive attention on it, and to make it central to his identity development. For those people who have accepted the socio-cultural assumptions regarding homosexuality, this translates to an excessive preoccupation with the individual's sexuality.

The extent to which the individual is in conflict about his homosexual needs because he has internalized the homophobia of the dominant society, is the extent to which he may be said to have a homosexual identity (in contrast to a gay identity). It is

postulated that this homosexual identity accords with Erikson's (1968) concept of identity confusion -- the failure to establish a positive integrated ego identity. He points to two important defining qualities of identity: "the perception of the self sameness and continuity of one's existence in time and space -- and the perception of the fact that others recognize one's sameness and continuity" (p.50). When fragmentation, compartmentalization and conflict, as well as hiding, lying and secrecy characterize the individual's life, it may be said that to that extent, a positive, integrated sense of self sameness and continuity -- both to oneself and to significant others -- has not been established. It is postulated here, that to the extent that the individual's identity is a homosexual identity, it may be characterized as confused.

Erikson (1968) refers to three "symptoms" of identity confusion that seem particularly relevant to homosexual identity. The first is a sense of doubt and shame -- as opposed to a sense of autonomy. As we have seen, doubt and shame are both central characteristics of homosexual identity in a homophobic sociocultural environment. The second symptom is "identity consciousness" -- as opposed to self certainty. This is defined as "a special form of painful self-consciousness which dwells on discrepancies between one's self-esteem, the aggrandized self-image as an autonomous person, and one's appearance in the eyes of others" (p.183). Again, this identity consciousness is common to the homosexual male in a homophobic environment. The third symptom relevant to a homosexual identity is

"bisexual confusion" -- "the young person does not feel himself clearly to be a member of one sex or the other." This is opposed to "the polarization of sexual differences" -- "the elaboration of a particular ratio of masculinity and feminity in line with identity development" (p.186).

Erikson's own homophobic view of homosexuality is clear in his discussion of bisexual confusion. He states that bisexual confusion may make the individual "the easy victim of the pressure emanating, for example, from homosexual cliques, for to some persons it is more bearable to be typed as something, anything, than to endure drawn-out bisexual confusion" (p.186). While his point about the need of some individuals to avoid confusion by any means is well taken, his use of the terms "easy victim" and "pressure" from "homosexual cliques" seems reflective of, and indeed feeds, the common sociocultural myths of homosexuals recruiting boys for their ranks. Indeed, in reality the developmental data indicate that the adolescent boy struggles with his discovered difference and often only reluctantly accepts his homosexuality, if he ever does. In addition, Erikson confuses homosexuality, sex-role identity, and gender-identity in his discussion of bisexual confusion and homosexuality, thereby iatrogenically creating and feeding confusion in his attempt to clarify. Indeed it is just this sociocultural confusion that makes this sympton of bisexual confusion relevant to homosexual identity in the first place. While many adolescent boys do indeed struggle with questions of sex-role and gender/identity, the struggle is greatly

intensified for the homosexual boy by the homophobic and homosexist myths created, and supported, by many psychiatric clinicians and theoreticians in their attempts to clarify and explain "normal" development.

Erikson makes several important points about the effects of identity confusion on intimate relationships. These are reflective of his conviction that "the development of psychosocial intimacy is not possible without a firm sense of identity." One of the most important of these points focuses on the perceived danger of intimacy, when, in adolescence, bisexual confusion "joins identity consciousness in the establishment of an excessive preoccupation with the question of what kind of man or woman, or what kind of intermediate or deviate, one might become. In his totalistic frame of mind, an adolescent may feel that to be a little less of one sex means to be much more, it not all, of the other. If at such a time something happens that marks him socially a deviant, he may develop a deep fixation, reinforced by the transvaluation of a negative identity, and true intimacy will then seem dangerous" (p.186).

Another danger that Erikson points to is the fear of loss of identity resulting from interpersonal fusion: "For where an assured sense of identity is missing, even friendships and affairs become desperate attempts at delineating the fuzzy outlines of identity by mutual narcissistic mirroring: to fall in love then often means to fall into one's mirror image, hurting oneself and damaging one's mirror." One consequence of this fear of identity loss through fusion is "a tense inner reservation, a caution in commitment" (p.167).

Identity confusion then leads the individual to view intimacy as dangerous. To Erikson, "the counterpart of intimacy is <u>distaniation</u>, the readiness to repudiate, isolate, and if necessary, destroy those forces and people whose essense seems dangerous to one's own" (p.136). Given this perception of intimacy as dangerous, Erikson suggests that the individual has several options: he may shy away from intimate relationships and isolate himself; he may enter only highly stereotyped and formalized interpersonal relationships; he may, "in repeated hectic attempts and dismal failures, seek intimacy with the most improbable partners" (p.167); he may throw himself into "acts of intimacy which are 'promiscuous' without true fusion or real self-abandon" and which are characterized by a kind of "genital combat in which each tries to defeat the other" (p.135-136).

The identity confused individual is immersed in a self-protective vicious circle -- the development of true intimacy is impossible without a firm sense of identity, while at the same time, true intimacy with others is "the result and test of firm self-delineation" (p.167). The identity confused individual views intimacy as dangerous and keeps himself away from the very relationships through which he may develop and clarify his sense of self. The result is a sense of isolation. For the homosexual boy, this sense of isolation is usually familiar. To the extent that the individual's identity is a homosexual identity -- i.e., a confused identity -- it is postulated that his intimate relationships will be minimal, or marked by a sense of danger, and focused on genital sexuality, with little real intimacy

between the partners. The individual's sense of isolation will be maintained and reinforced. The development of a gay identity through interpersonal interactions in the gay community offers the homosexual individual a way out of his isolation, a chance to establish intimate relationships with other gay men, and thus to further the growth of a firm sense of identity as a gay man.

THE TRANSITION TO A GAY IDENTITY

The developmental data indicate that the decision to identify oneself as homosexual occurs at around ages 19 to 21. This seems to mean that the individual accepts the reality of his being homosexual and chooses to label himself as such. It must be stressed that the term gay has replaced the term homosexual in popular usuage and is more appropriate in this context.

For most men, this self-identification and acceptance is an important point as it represents the beginning of the transition from a homosexual identity to a gay identity. His acceptance of his homosexuality motivates him to enter and explore the gay community. As he makes contact with other gay men, he begins to feel less isolated. He slowly is socialized as a member of this supportive community which provides him with a "program" for being a gay man. Slowly, he acquires a gay identity. His identity becomes less confused and conflicted, and more stable and integrated. His conflicts about his homosexual needs decrease as he learns to reject the dominant homophobic view of his homosexuality. Instead, he learns

to view his homosexuality with pride. His self image improves as he develops a greater sense of self-worth through his sociable and intimate relationships with other gay men, as well as through his interactions with a supportive gay community. His identity becomes less fragmented and compartmentalized as he is able to integrate more fully the emotional, social and sexual aspects of his life. I am postulating that, as the individual develops a gay identity, his intimate relationships are likely to be perceived as less dangerous, be less focused exclusively on genital sexuality, improve in quality, prove more satifying, and serve to reinforce and support a growing positive self-image.

De Monteflores and Schultz (1978) define three processes important in the development of a gay identity: cognitive transformation; recasting the past; and self labeling. These three interrelated aspects of identity formation contribute to self-acceptance, and are means by which the gay person attempts to respond to norms and values in society and to find his place in relation to them.

The concept of cognitive transformation was originally elaborated by Dank (1971). He suggested that a change in the meaning of the cognitive category "homosexual" was required before the individual could place himself in that category. Specifically, the negative connotations of the label must be modified or eliminated. Dank felt that contact and identification with the gay community were necessary for the individual for such a cognitive transformation to occur (p.120).

A reworking of one's past experience is viewed by De Montleflores and Schultz as necessary to "animate the cognitive transformation." "Constructing a more positive and relevant sense of history and lineage becomes important" for the individual gay person as well as for the gay community. "For an individual who is coming out, exploring the past often reveals previously disowned feelings of attraction to members of the same sex. Patterns of past behavior and relationships which have been forgotten or ignored are now seen and integrated into the developing identity. The meaning of love is altered to include a same-sex object. Anguish and anger at having failed for so long to recognize an important part of the self may also be experienced" (pp.64-65). Cognitive transformation and recasting the past may both be seen as necessary attempts by the individual to reduce the cognitive dissonance engendered by his being homosexual in a homophobic environment. Lee (1977) also spoke of both of these processes and referred to them as "retrospective interpretation."

De Monteflores and Schultz (1978) view the individual's self labeling as having both integrating and instrumental purposes. "The new label integrates experience by synthesizing events and aspects of self which had seemed disparate." This integration enables the individual to then use "appropriate instrumental behavior" more effectively to satisfy his needs for same-sex emotional, affectional and sexual intimacy (pp.64-65).

The APA data (1979) indicate that the majority of gay male psychologists reported acquiring a "positive gay identity." This

occurred at an average age of 28.5 years -- about seven years after they first considered themselves homosexual, and about sixteen years after their first awareness of homosexual feeling. The exact nature of this experience of a "positive gay identity" is unclear. Perhaps it corresponds to the process of transition from a homosexual to a gay identity. The meaning of these data remains unclear.

The APA (1979) data also indicated that, on the average, the gay male psychologists considered themselves homosexual ten months before their first same-sex relationship, which occurred at about age 22 years. Bell and Weinberg (1979) report that about one third of their white male respondents were between the ages of twenty and twenty three when they began their first "affair" with another man -- with the average age being twenty-three. This first affair generally lasted between one and three years. They offer no data on the age of labeling self as homosexual for comparison. However, the data may suggest that for some men, the first affair may provide an important function in the transformation from homosexual to gay identity. It may provide for socialization into the gay community and perhaps, serves as a refuge for the individual from the anxiety engendered by first entering the unknown gay community.

Finally, it must be stressed that the degree of conflict about homosexual needs as well as the degree of internalized homophobia, rather than the individual's own label of himself, are used here to differentiate between homosexual and gay identity. Consequently, many men may be said to retain a basically confused homosexual identity

despite the fact that they label themselves "gay." In addition, because homophobia is so pervasive in our culture, It is postulated that all gay-identified men maintain some degree of conflict about their homosexuality and, thus, some degree of internalized homophobia over their life course. That is, no matter how much of a gay identity the individual develops, elements of a confused homosexual identity are retained. Homosexual identity and gay identity are not viewed here as an either/or, mutually exclusive choice, but rather as dual aspects of ego identity. What changes as the individual becomes less conflicted about his needs and rejects the homophobia of the dominant culture, is the relative proportions of these two elements of ego identity. His socialization into the gay community facilitates a growing sense of gay, relative to homosexual, identity. This, in turn, facilitates intimacy between gay men.

AGING AND GAY MEN

There has been a specific focus in the social science literature on aging in gay males (Francher & Henkin, 1973; Kelly, 1977; Kimmel, 1977, 1978, 1979; Weinberg & Williams, 1973). The results of these studies show marked consistency. The findings of each contradict the stereotype of the aging homosexual as an unhappy, isolated, lonely, dispairing, tragic, dirty old man. What was found instead was a diverse group of men who had varied adaptions to their homosexuality and to their aging.

The important issues for these men have revolved around two main themes: 1) their aging; 2) their homosexuality. Gay males have many of the same problems and concerns about aging that heterosexuals do. This is especially true regarding health issues and the potential physical disabilities associated with old age, as well as dealing with the stigmatization of aging, and ageism in our culture.

The second important issue centers around their adaption to being homosexual. This revolves around their experience of oppression and the homosexual identity and lifestyle they have developed in response to their oppression. There is discussion in the literature of both the advantages and disadvantages for aging gay men resulting from their adaption to their homosexuality. For example, while aging may present the same potential physiological and medical problems to homosexuals and heterosexuals, the discriminatory nature of customs, laws, and rules regarding hospitalizations and health services, insurance, property, mourning, wills and inheritance faced by homosexuals cause additional stresses for aging gay men (Kelly, 1977; Kimmel, 1979).

The issue of "family" is an important one for gay men. Research on aging indicates that kinship supports are important in the aging process (Booth 1972; Douvan and Adelson, 1966; Kimmel, 1978; Lowenthal & Associates). Gay men often age without the traditional institutional supports provided by the family of origin, the extended family, as well as the nuclear family. Francher and Henkin (1973) point out that homosexual men often confront a major life crisis early

in adulthood involving the issue of whether or not to share their homosexual identity with their family of origin. This conflict often results in the gay man feeling isolated and alienated from his family. Fear of coming out to family members may create distance, anxiety, dishonesty, little self-disclosure, and consequently less familiarity between family members. Often gay men will move away from their family to larger cities to be free to explore their homosexuality. In addition, negative familial reactions to one's coming out may create strain in, or the breaking of familial ties.

Often it seems that the individual's involvement in a lover relationship -- especially if the partners live together -- provides the impetus for his coming out to his family. If he is already out to his family, his involvement with another man certainly presents the family with the concrete reality of his homosexuality. This can often precipitate new conflicts in family relationships as the working through process proceeds to a new level.

The issues of the nuclear family and parenting are important ones for gay men as well. There are certainly many gay men who are, or have been, heterosexually married, and who are parents. The degree to which these men are out to their families, the contact they have with their families, and the level of support they receive for their homosexual relationships from their families are all important variables to examine. Those married men who lead a double life and are secretive with their heterosexual families are probably more likely to have limited, fragmented, primarily sexual relationships

with other men. It takes courage and creativity for a heterosexually married couple to integrate a partner's intimate gay relationships into their life style. This courage is neeed because we are taught that homosexuality, on the one hand, and heterosexuality and parenting, on the other, are mutually exclusive choices. In addition, many gay men incorporate the idea perpetuated by Rado and Beiber (1962) that homosexuality results from "incapacitating fears of the opposite sex." Gay men often internalize this myth and view their homosexuality as a negative fear of women, rather than as a positive need for men. Therefore, they often eliminate the possibility of heterosexual coupling and parenting children on the basis of invalid assumptions about the meaning of their homosexuality. Since, homosexuals are, in effect, an invisible population, there are no statistics on the number of homosexual and gay men who are married or who have children. Clearly, however, large numbers of gay men are not currently married and therefore lack the support traditionally offered by the nuclear family, and in-laws, during aging.

Given their unique sociocultural position, gay men have evolved an innovative solution to this lack of traditional familial support systems. They have devloped an alternative family system through their friendship networks. Francher and Henkin (1973) found "in developmental sequence a gradual diminishing of family support and a concomitant increase in supports and expectations of reciprocity within the homosexual peer group" (p.671). Kimmel (1977) reports that by age 60 the gay men he studied had "actively created their own

social environment" including a circle of gay friends. "If ties with parents or family are maintained, it is usually becaue they have been supportive and at least passively acceptant of the person's lifestyle" (p.391). These friendship networks -- which will be discussed in chapter five -- serve some of the same support functions traditionally provided by the family.

Douvan and Adelson (1966) make a point about intimacy and familial relationships that may have relevance for gay men. In discussing various barriers to the establishment of intimate friendships, they point out that familial ties may reduce or eliminate the need for intimacy with peers. They cite evidence that for many people -- especially men -- close personal ties are confined to the extended family and may provide for many of the functions of friendships. Although these familial ties may not be intimate, they provide for comfort, continuity, familiarity, and are often of an unconditional nature. They do not, however, provide the opportunity for the exploration and extension of self that is provided by non-kin relationships and thus kin ties help to keep the self at a status quo. Perhaps, as family relationships serve some of the functions of friendships, intimate friendships may serve some of the functions of the family, and indeed provide a "family" when no kinship ties are available. Since intimate friendships provide greater opportunity to explore and extend the self than familial ties do, perhaps gay men have a greater opportunity for self knowledge and growth than those men living in traditional extended families.

The literature focuses on other advantages that gay men may have in the aging process. Francher and Henkin (1973) note that the homosexual's early life crisis centering around "the management of a secret identity," while often resulting in loneliness, alienation and isolation from signficant family members, may at the same time be potentially functional in adjusting to the aging process. Kimmel (1978) agrees and suggests that this early life crisis may provide the individual with a sense of "crisis competence" with which he can more effectively deal with the crises accompanying aging. He also suggests that aging may bring less dramatic changes for gay men because they are often less involved in the developmental crises and role changes common over the life course of childrearing and the nuclear family process.

In addition, many gay men have lived alone, at times, or throughout their life. Consequently, they have developed the skills necessary for living alone and have become self reliant. This is good preparation for old age when many people live alone. This preparation is often unavailable to heterosexuals who wind up living alone when divorced or widowed and who have to learn self reliance after having relied on their spouse for years.

Finally, it is important to point out a factor in the gay male community that creates problems for aging gay men. This is the exaggerated importance of youth and physical attractiveness. Kimmel (1978) points out that the age stigmatization within the gay community tends to feed feelings of low self-worth among older gay men as well

as "to segregate the gay male world into the young and the old so that effective links across these gay generations are less frequent than in the heterosexual world" (p.128). This age segregation is also fed by the friendship network of peers that provides fewer opportunities for contact with younger people than traditional families do.

The position of these aging gay men is unique. They have experienced the radical transformation of the gay community and the reconceptualization of homosexuality during their adulthood. Identity formation has traditionally been viewed as an adolescent phenomenon. These men provide a unique opportunity to reexamine the process of identity development and change and to explore the ramifications for individuals of a major redefinition of their self identity occuring during adulthood or old age. Research to understand these men's experiences, as well as to ascertain their needs in order to provide them with more effective social services, should be encouraged and supported.

CHAPTER FOUR

SEX-ROLE IDENTITY AND INTIMATE RELATIONSHIPS

A difference between men and women in their conception and experience of intimacy and in the nature of their intimate relationships is the strongest, most consistent finding in the social science literature on intimacy. Men, as compared to women, are repeatedly found to have less training for, and experience with intimacy, and are, therefore, less emotionally involved in intimate relationships. This difference has traditionally been seen to be a result of innate differences between the sexes and/or differential sex-role socialization.

In our sexist and gender differentiated society, gender is determinant of many of the individual's socialization opportunites and experiences. In addition, much of the socialization process is concerned with teaching the individual what it means to be a man or a woman (both behaviorally and psychologically) in our society -- i.e., sex-role socialization. Individuals develop a conception of themselves in terms of their "sex-role identity" which is used here to signify an important aspect of the individual's self-identity regarding their conception of themselves as masculine and/or feminine (including both sex-role behaviors and psychological dimensions of masculinity/femininity). It must be stressed that like the development of self-identity, of which it is an important aspect,

sex-role identity development, by whatever process it occurs, is a unique individual process. The individual's sex-role identity depends on the socially defined definitions of masculinity and femininity in their unique sociocultural milieu, their unique interpersonal experiences with men and women, and their unique perceptions and conceptions of masculinity and femininity during the course of their development. It is postulated that an individual's sex-role identity will have a significant effect on their conception and experience of intimacy and the nature of their intimate relationships over their life course.

One specific goal of the current study is to attempt to understand the effects of sex-role identity on intimate relationships between gay men. In order to achieve this aim, it is first necessary to examine the male sex-role within the context of the recent reconceptualization of sex differences and sex-roles in society as a whole and within the social sciences as well. Then, the major requirements (both behaviorally and psychologically) of the traditional male sex-role, learned by the male in his sex-role socialization, will be examined. The restrictive and repressive nature of these requirements will be explored. The focus will be on the limitations these requirements place on men's intimate relationships in general, with particular attention focused on male/male intimacy and on intimacy between gay men. In addition, the nature of the social process of homophobia and its relationship to the maintenance of the male sex-role will be explored. One significant aspect of homophobia is the "casual

connection" between homosexuality and sex-role inversion (i.e., men doing or feeling anything feminine). The effects of this erroneous association on gay men's sex-role identity and on their intimate relationships will be examined.

SEX DIFFERENCES AND SEX-ROLES

The issue of sex differences and differential sex-role socialization is currently undergoing reevaluation and change. The specific factors that limit men's intimacy with each other must be looked at within the context of both the traditional view and the recent reconceptualization of sex differences and sex-roles.

The Traditional Perspective

The origins of sex-role differentiation and the factors that maintain it are a source of controversy and not at issue here. However, differentiation between the sexes is universal among human societies. Men and women are assigned different roles, tasks, rights, privileges and powers and are subject to different rules of conduct. There is a division of labor of social tasks according to gender. It is typically assumed that men and women possess different and complimentary personality characteristics, temperments, and abilities in order to carry out these different social tasks and to discharge their responsibilities to family and society. Thus, these personality differences are seen as both an explanation and a justification for the roles assigned to each sex.

Traditionally -- although Mead's (1935) study of three New Guinea tribes show the distinctions to be relative -- men are given primary responsibility for providing for the family's economic well-being and for dealing with the outside world. Women, on the other hand, are given primary responsibility for caring for children, the family dwelling, and the emotional needs of the family members. This fundamental distinction between the sexes has been noted by numerous social scientists: Parsons and Bales (1955) distinguished between instrumental (masculine) and expressive (feminine) orientations; Erikson (1964) differentiated between inner (female) and outer (male) space; and, Bakan (1966) saw two fundamental modalities -- the agentic (masculine) and the communal (feminine).

This traditional view of rigid sex-role differentiation was based on a series of four implicit assumptions:

1) sex differentiation operated on a linear model -- a simple progression from genetics through physiology through sex-roles through to innate personality differences and temperaments between men and women. These sex differences were viewed as enduring, innate, biologically determined traits. Correspondingly, biological gender, sexual orientation, masculine/feminine sex-role behavior and the psychological dimensions of masculine/feminine personality characteristics were implicitly assumed to be highly correlated. To the lay public, sex-role behavior was thought to be causally connected to masculine/feminine personality characteristics and to sexual orientation -- i.e., if a male child

did not act according to the traditional male sex-role requirements, he was assumed to resemble females psychologically and/or be homosexual;

2) The roles and personality characteristics of one sex were antithetical to the other. Masculine and feminine personality characteristics were viewed as bipolar opposites of a single dimension -- with women clustered near the feminine end and men clustered near the masculine end. Masculine attributes were assumed to preclude feminine ones; at times, the feminine was defined by an absence of the masculine;

3) Masculine qualities were seen as positive and superior and feminine qualities were seen as negative and inferior;

4) The goal of socialization was to inculcate sex-appropriate personality characteristics and behaviors so that men and women could fulfill their culturally assigned sex-roles and successfully discharge their responsibilities to family and society. The appropriately sex-typed person was the ideal of mental health and was seen as the only natural and desirable state for the individual. It was assumed that sex typed individuals would be more behaviorally adaptive and effective.

Sexual differentiation within the context of these assumptions involved the development of shared cultural norms and implicit and explicit sociocultural definitions of appropriate sex-role behavior and masculine/feminine personality characteristics. It was based on sex-role stereotypes about male and female behavior, and the

institutionalization of the rigid maintenance of the traditional distinctions between the sexes.

This traditional view of sex-role differentiation affected the social science Zeitgeist and the focus and methodology of empirical research. For example, psychologists have studied three major areas:

1) the study of sex differences, which has focused especially on three aspects -- ability, personality, and interests (e.g., Maccoby and Jacklin, 1974);
2) the nature of sex-role stereotypes (Broverman, et al, 1972; Rosenkrantz et al, 1968);
3) the acquisition and development of sex-roles[9] -- the three major approaches have been: a) the psychoanalytic model which focuses on parental identification (Sears, Maccoby & Levin, 1957); b) social learning theory (Mischel, 1970); and c) the cognitive-developmental model (Kohlberg, 1966).

The Recent Reconceptualization

The conception and study of sex differences, sex-roles, and the psychological dimension of masculinity/femininity are currently undergoing reevaluation and change. Accumulating social science data on sex differences often produced contradictory and confusing results and pointed to more variability and a less clear cut connection between physiology, sex-roles, and psychological dimensions of masculinity/femininity. The role of environmental factors in development and the maleability of personality were recognized. The first assumption of a natural linear model for sex differentiation had to be reevaluated.

Evolutionary sociocultural changes in the family structure and the economic structure over the last 150 years have resulted in a gradual sex-role restructuring. This has been evident mainly in a blurring of formerly sharp distinctions in socially expected behavior of men and women, and a broadening of socially appropriate sex-role behavior for women particularly, but for men as well.

The revolutionary changes of the past decade, brought about by the Women's Movement, have led to an understanding and appreciation of the sexist nature of society and social science research and theory in the assumption (#3 above) of the superiority of masculine qualities to feminine ones. The Women's Movement and the Gay Rights Movement have resulted in a questioning and challenging of the assumption, underlying sex-differentiation, that masculinity and femininity were mutually exclusive bipolar opposites. These movements also promoted the realization of how limiting and restrictive traditional concepts of sex-roles had been for both women and men.[10]

For a clearer understanding of the recent conceptual changes in sex differences and masculinity/femininity it would be helpful to differentiate between four dimensions previously assumed to be highly correlated and linearly related, but discovered to be complex, orthogonal and less clearly related. The nature of the relationship that does exist between these dimensions remains unclear. The four dimensions are: 1) gender; 2) sexual orientation; 3) sex-role; and 4) the psychological dimension of masculinity/femininity.

Gender refers to the biological sex of the individual usually classified as male or female at birth. An awareness, acceptance, and a secure sence of one's maleness or femaleness is referred to as gender identity (Bem, 1976; Green, 1974; Spence & Helmreich, 1978).

Sexual orientation refers to the individual's need for a sexual partner of the same or opposite sex; a homosexual sexual orientation refers to an individual's need for sexual contact with others of the same sex. Biology and socialization were assumed to lead naturally to a heterosexual sexual orientation. Traditionally, a homosexual orientation for men has been correlated with, and causally related to, gender identity confusion, sex-role inversion, and a lack of psychological masculinity. In fact, however, sexual orientation is postulated to be part of a larger need system for same-sex emotional, affectional and sexual intimacy that "ought ultimately to be considered orthogonal to any concept of mental health or ideal personality" (Bem, 1976, p. 49). Sexual orientation says nothing about the individual's behavior, self-concept, or his personality characteristics. The possible effects of the confusion between homosexuality and masculinity/femininity on intimate relationships between gay men will be examined later.

Sex-role is perhaps the most difficult of the dimensions to define. Much like the concepts of intimacy and love, the definitions offered by social scientists are contradictory, unclear, and often inconsistent. As Angrist (1969) points out, sex-role has become an all-purpose label to describe all the ways males and females are

assumed to differ -- including differences in behavior, abilities, and personality characteristics. This confused, all-purpose usage is particularly true in psychological research. For example, Bem (1974), one of the earliest psychologists to challenge traditional notions of sex differences, refers to her measure of the individual's masculine and/or feminine personality characteristics as sex-role identity.

Spence and Helmreich (1978) cogently argue that sex-role be differentiated from the psychological dimension of masculinity/femininity. They propose that sex-role be used exclusively to refer to socially appropriate behavior for men and women -- "behaviors that are positively sanctioned for members of one sex and ignored or negatively sanctioned for members of the other" (p. 13). Citing Angrist (1969), they point out that sex-role behavior refers to a multitude of roles and role combinations that vary across situations and over the life span.

It is in the reconceptualization of the psychological dimension of masculinity/femininity (including Bem's sex-role identity, Spence and Helmreich's personality dimension of masculinity/femininity, and most other uses of the term sex-role in psychological research) that the recent changes have been most extensive. Stimulated by the historical and sociocultural changes noted previously, and by Bakan's (1966) contention that humans must try to balance or integrate agency (masculine) and communion (feminine) orientations if the individual and society are to survive, researchers began to reformulate their ideas about sex differences and masculinity/femininity (Bem, 1974;

Bernard, 1974; Block, 1973; Constantinople, 1973; and, Spence, Helmreich and Stapp, 1974, 1975).

Rather than the traditional bipolar, negatively correlated, unidimensional concept of masculinity/femininity, researchers, free from the sexist assumption of the superiority of masculine over feminine characteristics, proposed separate, orthogonal dimensions of psychological masculinity and femininity. These two dimensions were seen to vary more or less independently of each other in each individual regardless of gender. Androgyny was viewed as a balance of both positively valued masculine and positively valued feminine personality characteristics in the individual. This balance of masculine and feminine personality characteristics allowed for greater individual flexibility of sex-role behavior that is more responsive to the sociocultural context and demands of the particular situation. According to Bem (1976), "It is possible in principle for an individual to be both masculine and feminine, both instrumental and expressive, both agentic and communal, depending upon the situational appropriateness of these various modalities, and even for the individual to blend these complementary modalities in a single act" (p. 50).

Not only is it viewed as possible that individuals balance masculine and feminine characteristics, but it is now often viewed as essential for fully effective and healthy human functioning. This view challenges the assumption that the goal of socialization is to inculcate sex-appropriate sex-role behaviors and sex-typed personality

characteristics. In fact, many view sex-role transendence and androgyny as the more appropriate goal of socialization (Bakan, 1966; Bem, 1976; Kaplan & Bean, 1976; Rebecca, Hefner & Oleshansky, 1976).

It must be noted that the development of the concept of androgyny occurred within the context of the development of two self-report instruments with separate, independent measures of positively valued psychological masculine and feminine personality characteristics (Bem's BSRI, 1974; and Spence, Helmreich & Stapp's PAQ, 1974, 1975). These scales were able to differentiate between four sex-role outcomes: masculine or feminine sex-typed individuals (either gender appropriate or cross sex-typed individuals); androgynous individuals (approximately equally high endorsement of both masculine and feminine characteristics) and undifferentiated individuals (low endorsement of both masculine and feminine characteristics). These scales replaced the older unidimensional bipolar scales and have produced a wealth of data. The scales have been used primarily to investigate personality and behavioral correlates of sex-typed and androgynous individuals. For example, Bem (1975) reports empirical support for the hypothesis that androgynous individuals displayed greater sex-role adaptability across situations than sex-typed individuals; in addition, sex-typed individuals avoided cross-sex behaviors, thus limiting their behavioral options (Bem, 1976). High self-esteem has also been found to be positively correlated to androgyny scores (Spence & Helmreich, 1978).

It must be stressed that androgyny is not a singular concept. Several overlapping but not identical, definitions are offered and the new scales developed to measure androgyny measure overlapping, but not identical, constructs (Lenney, 1979). So again, comparison of conceptual constructs and empirical results must be approched with caution.

THE MALE SEX-ROLE AND INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

The Basic Dimensions of the Male Sex-Role

Given the context of the changing conception of sex differences, and aware that sex-role has generally been used in psychology to connote both appropriate sex-role behavior and masculine/feminine personality characteristics, it would be helpful to delineate the basic dimensions of the male sex-role. The socially prescribed male sex-role is, however, far from clear and specific. There are persistent paradoxes and contradictions about what traits, behaviors and personality characteristics men are socially expected to develop. Several ideal images of "the real man" are offered. Since the specific requirements are unclear and contradictory, this often results in confusion among men in our society about the behavioral and personality requirements culturally expected of them.[11] Ruth Hartley (1959) in her classic examination of male socialization points out that "the desired bahavior is rarely defined positively as something the child <u>should</u> do, but rather, undesirable behavior is

indicated negatively as something he should _not_ do or be" (p. 235). Thus, the male-sex role is defined, to a large degree, by what it is not.

Although cognizant of its elusive quality and contradictory nature, there have been several attempts to outline the basic underlying themes or components that define the traditional male sex-role. David and Brannon (1976) have provided perhaps the most detailed attempt. While noting that there are many desired qualities not strongly associated with either male or female sex-roles, they outline four themes that comprise the core requirements of the male sex-role. These are: 1) No Sissy Stuff -- the stigma of all stereotyped feminine characteristics and qualities including openness and vulnerability; 2) The Big Wheel -- success, status, achievement, and the need to be looked up to; 3) The Sturdy Oak -- a manly air of toughness, confidence, and self-reliance; and 4) Give 'Em Hell -- the aura of aggression, violence and daring.

David and Brannon (1976) draw the following composite of the male sex-role in its pure form:

> All together and in its purest form, the male sex role depicts a rather remarkable creature. This hypothetical man never feels anxious, depressed, or vulnerable, has never known the taste of tears, is devoid of any trace or hint of femininity. He is looked up to by all who know him, is a tower of strength both physically and emotionally, and exudes an unshakable confidence and

> determination that sets him apart from lesser beings.
> He's also aggressive, forceful, and daring, a barely
> controlled volcano of primal force. (p. 36)

David and Brannon believe that this male role in its pure form is obviously unrealistic and unbelievable and that real people do not, and are not expected to, fulfill these ideal cultural prescriptions in every respect. Rather, "The adult male role, then, is basically a set of alternatives, some portion of which must be met to qualify one as a 'real man', but with many possibilities for choice and compensation" (p. 40). In addition, different aspects of the role are accentuated at different developmental periods, and by different socio-economic classes, ethnic and religious subgroups. The one exception to this is the first theme -- No Sissy Stuff or the need to be different from women -- which remains a strong requirement throughout.

Others have also sought to define the essential characterstics of the elusive male sex-role. Pleck and Sawyer (1974) believe that the male sex-role disposes men to both seek achievement and to suppress emotion in the traditional masculine pursuit of power, prestige and profit -- "getting ahead" and "staying cool". Fasteau (1972) reports that "real men are never passive or dependent, and don't talk about or directly express feeling, especially feelings that don't contribute to dominance" (p. 16). According to Jourard (1971), "The male role, as personally and socially defined, requires man to appear tough, objective, striving, achieving, unsentimental, and emoitionally unexpressive" (p. 22). Farrell (1974), in discussing the models available to boys during socialization, reports that:

> At an early age boys see models of men who seek material success, physical and psychological strength, leadership, invulnerability; who suppress their fear, control their emotions; who are pragmatic, know all the answers, never seek help, are tough and independent; who have a substantial degree of power, ambition, and physical and sexual aggression; who have control in sexual relations and in all relations, initiate sexual relations, make decisions, can get what they want when they want it; who generally want to be on top, be a protector, earn more than __________ and in general be better than ___________ (preferably a man; if not, then a women). (pp. 29-30)

Pleck (1976) distinguishes between the traditional male role and the modern male role which has evolved with sociocultural change and changing individual needs. He sees this gradual change as a source of contradictions and confusion for men, and notes that elements of both the traditional and modern male role exist in men at this point in time.

Pleck outlines both the traditional and modern forms of the core male role requirements:

1) Stress on achievement -- In the traditional male role the major forms of achievement, which validated masculinity, were based on physical strength; for the modern male, achievement requires intellectual and interpersonal skills rather than physical strength; the interpersonal skills required are those that promote collaboration with others toward the goal of achievement;

2) Suppression of affect -- The traditional male role suppressed affect except for anger and impulsive behavior; feelings of tenderness and vulnerability were especially prohibited; interpersonal and emotional skills were undeveloped; the modern male is expected to stay emotionally "cool" with anger and impulsive behavior prohibited; the capability for tenderness and emotional intimacy are encouraged, but strictly limited to romantic heterosexual relationships and excluded in all other relationships, especially with other men; emotional relationships between men are weak or absent - instead relationships between men are pragmatic and functional.

Pleck seems to be saying that because of individual and social needs, men now pursue traditional goals in modern forms. Need for collaboration with others in order to achieve success in modern business has led to the development of intellectual and interpersonal skills. Need for emotional support in an alientating world is allowed expression, but only in heterosexual romantic relationships. Men's relationships with other men are not emotional, but rather pragmatic and functional. From Pleck's analysis, it seems that the breadth of the male role has widened; the situational role demands have become more flexible; the particular skills needed to fulfill the basic core requirements of the role have changed, but these basic core requirements have remained essentially unchanged. Men still strive to achieve, and affect essentially remains suppressed.

The Male Sex-Role as Restrictive of Interpersonal Relationships

General Considerations

While there is general agreement on the basic components of the male sex-role, there is almost universal agreement as to the oppressive, restrictive, and ultimately destructive nature of the traditional male sex-role. Jourard (1971) reports that "the male role, and the male's self-structure will not allow man to acknowledge or to express the entire breadth and depth of his inner experience, to himself or to others. Man seems obliged, rather, to hide much of his real self — the ongoing flow of his spontaneous inner experience -- from himself and others" (p. 22). Jourard ties this aspect of the male role to men's poor health and early death. He views the male role as harmful to health and utlimately lethal. He concludes, "If health, full-functioning happiness and creativity are valued goals for mankind, then laymen and behavioral scientists alike must seek ways of redefining the male role, to help it become less restrictive and repressive, more expressive of the 'complete' man, and more conducive to life" (p. 28).

Harrison (1978) agrees with Jourard. He believes that male role socialization contributes to a higher mortality rate for men. He asserts that "It is time that men especially begin to comprehend that the price paid for belief in the male role is shorter life expectancy. The male sex-role will become less hazardous to our health only insofar as it ceases to be defined as opposite to the female role, and comes to be defined as one genuinely human way to

live" (p. 83). David and Brannon (1976) also note that the need for men to reject the emotional aspects of their personality -- stemming from the traditional view of men and women as polar oppositie s -- results in men rejecting a vital half of their personalities.

Farrell (1974) believes that because of the "masculine mystique" men cannot help but become either emotionally incompetent (unable to handle emotions expressed by others) or emotionally constipated (unable to express their own emotions), or both. Balswick and Peek (1971) found that two types of inexpressive men typically result from the male socialization process: 1) the cowboy -- men who have feelings and don't express them; and 2) the playboy -- men who do not have feelings and hence cannot express them, or at best, can only simulate feelings in situations wherein he hopes to gain something; when the gain has taken place, the playboy reverts back to his non-feeling self (pp. 55-57).

Goldberg (1976) states that "our culture is saturated with successful male zombies, businesssmen zombies, golf zombies, sports car zombies, playboy zombies, etc. They are playing the rules of the male game plan. They have lost touch with, or are running away from, their feelings and awareness of themselves as people. They have confused their social masks for their essence and they are destroying themselves while fulfilling the traditional definitions of masculine-appropriate behavior" (p. 3).

Brannon (1976) concludes that "I have gradually come to realize that I, with every other man I know, have been limited and diverted

from whatever our real potential might have been by the prefabricated mold of the sex role" (p. 5).

Theoretical Perspectives

Perhaps the most noted and examined limitation of the traditional male sex-role is the severe restrictions placed on men's interpersonal relationships. Nichols (1975) states that "the deprivations men suffer because of their paralyzing inability to express what they feel distort and maim their interpersonal relationships" (p. 37).

Jourard (1971) sees men's unexpressiveness and inaccessibility as hampering self-disclosure. In turn, insight and empathy, which he sees as promoted by self-disclosure, are hampered. Jourard sees insight, empathy, and self-disclosure as important aspects of loving. Lack of insight will certainly interfere with men's ability for self love which "implies behavior which will truly meet one's own needs and promote one's own growth" (p. 26). Lack of insight will also inhibit men's ability to be loved since they are unaware of their needs and reluctant to share them. These needs will therefore remain unverbalized and will likely go unmet by their partner. Citing Fromm's (1956) definition that love entails knowing the unique needs and characteristics of the loved person, Jourard points out that men's lack of empathy will therefore interfere with their ability to love others. In so far as men adhere to the traditional instrumental, unexpressive aspects of the male role, they will be handicapped "at self-loving, at loving others and at being loved" (p. 27).

David and Brannon (1976) suggest that the one proscriptive element inherent in the traditional male role is the first core requirement: No Sissy Stuff -- the stigma of anything vaguely feminine. This "injunction against being warm, open, tender, emotional and vulnerable" (p. 49) is one of the first things the male child learns. If he succeeds in learning to hide his feelings he can go on to compete for status and prestige with other men. If he publicly displays emotion -- except for anger which is seen as appropriate, allowed and encouraged -- he loses status and prestige especially in the eyes of other men.[12] Besides displays of anger, men are allowed public displays of emotion after some triumph or achievement which confirm their masculinity. The authors feel that "It is difficult to have one personality in public and another one in private, and inexpressiveness becomes a way of behaving in intimate relationships as well as in more impersonal ones. Men do not confide many of their innermost thoughts to their wives; to show doubts and insecurities would reveal men to be 'less than' they have claimed to be. Once the inexpressive image is created, it becomes increasingly difficult for a man to open up and to confide that he does indeed have 'feminine' feelings" (pp. 49-50).

Fasteau (1972) points to other related aspects of the prohibition on anything feminine which serves to keep men seperate in their interpersonal relations. Men are taught never to be "passive or dependent, and always dominant in their relationships with women or other men." He also points out that men are not supposed to talk

about or communicate their feelings, and stresses that this applies especially to "feelings that do not contribute to male dominance" (p. 19).

Gross (1978) identifies other aspects of the male role specifically related to sexual relationships. He identifies two male sexual themes which prevent men from experiencing rich heterosexual relationships that combine sex and affection. The first of these themes is the centrality of sexual behavior to masculine identity. Sex is perceived as more important, necessary and enjoyable for men than for women. This is compounded by the second theme -- the tendency of men to isolate sex from other social and psychological aspects of their lives. Thus, men tend to seperate sex from love and affection. In addition to these two themes, other aspects of the male sex role affect sexual intimacy. The male orientation to goals and success promotes a focus on the genitals and successful orgasm. Men's focus on power and mantaining control get acted out in the sexual relationship as well. Therefore, men are supposed to initiate the sexual act and to control the sexual process. They are unable to express ignorance and uncertainty, and they are unable to give up control, to relax, and to receive pleasure. These factors limit men's as well as women's sexual experience and intimacy, and act as severe limits on men's interpersonal relationships (pp. 87-100).

Fasteau (1974) has also commented on men's inability to combine sexual attraction and intimacy. He hypothesized that isolating sex from intimacy is a defense against male vulnerability and dependency.

If a man allows himself to combine sex and intimacy, he would have to allow himself to be dependent on his sexual partner. This dependency is not compatable with the internatlized male need for independence, control and power (p. 90).

<u>Empirical Research on Male Affiliative Style</u>

Empirical research studies also offer support to the notion that men's approach to interpersonal relationships -- or as Pleck (1975) calls it, male affiliative style -- is less personal and intimate than women's.

Pleck (1975) reports several studies on children's friendships which show that this difference is seen early in life. Goodenough (1957) found that parents expect young boys to be less involved than girls in personal relations. Guardo (1969) found that boys put greater spatial distance between figures representing themselves and their best friends than girls do, when asked to represent "best friends" in a play construction task. Horrocks and Thompson (1946) found that boys show less stability in their friendships than girls (Pleck, 1975, p. 230).

This affiliative style, developed early, continues into adulthood. Jourard (1971), in his research on patterns of self-disclosure, has shown in several studies that men typically reveal less personal information about themselves to others than women. In addition, men disclose less to male friends than women do to female friends. Finally, men receive much less personal information from others than women do (Jourard, 1961; Jourard &

Lasakow, 1958; Jourard & Landsman, 1960; and Jourard & Richmond, 1963). Given Jourard's view of self-disclosure as an index of openess and as a factor in health, insight, and empathy, men's self-disclosure style would seem to work against intimacy with either women or other men.

Other empirical support for restrictive male affiliative style comes from Knupfer, Clark and Room (1966) who report that unmarried men had less close relationships with both men and women than unmarried women did. Nye (1976) also found that married men went to both men and women friends less frequently for "therapeutic" purposes than their wives did. Shipley and Veroff (1952) and Veroff and Feld (1970), using a projective measure of the "need for affiliation," found that men high in "need for affiliation" were rated by other men as having "negative" qualities such as need for approval and dependency, while women high in "need for affiliation" were not seen as having these "negative" qualities.

Finally, in research on the nonverbal aspects of relationships, Sommer (1967) found that men perfer greater spatial distance between themselves and others than women do. Argyle (1967) reports that men make less eye contact with others during interaction than women do, and specifically, make less eye contact in their interactions with other men.

Pleck (1975) cautions against overstating the results of these studies, concluding that these average differences mean that intimate relationships are less common in men than in women, but that they are not nonexistant.

In summary, investigators have pointed to several aspects of the traditional male sex-role which interfere with men's ability to relate intimately. Basically, these blocks to intimacy are: the inability to experience, label, and communicate feelings and needs if they are allowed into awareness; lack of empathy for others; aversion to vulnerability; inability to allow oneself to be passive or dependent; the separation of sex and intimacy; the need to dominate and control; and, the need for status, prestige, achievement and power.

These restrictions on interpersonal relationships that have been examined have focused mainly on interpersonal relationships between men and women. Clearly, traditional male and female sex-roles are restrictive of intimacy between men and women. However, these sex-roles were conceived of as complementary. While not providing for rich intimate relationships, they have provided structure for male/female relationships, and have allowed both men and women some degree of intimacy, security, and comfort. The cross-sex dyad is institutionalized and supported by society. Male/male relationships are quite another story. It is in the interpersonal relationships between men that the traditional male sex-role is the most restrictive.

The Nature of Male/Male Relationships

Much that has been written about male/male intimacy is written from a heterosexual, although not necessarily homophobic, perspective. The emphasis is on non-sexual male/male intimate friendships between heterosexual men. Lewis (1978) defines this perspective: "this article is not about sexual behavior between men,

nor about typical male friendships; it is concerned with something in between, i.e., emotional intimacy" (p. 108). In addition to this perspective, male/male relationships are often compared to female/female friendship patterns, and are only rarely studied in and of themselves.

Many of the same components of the traditional male sex-role that serve to restrict intimate male/female relationships also operate to restrict male/male intimacy. However, two issues add to the problems that men have in being intimate with one another. The first is the fact that both partners in the relationship are men and the second factor is homophobia -- an irrational fear of homosexuality and/or homosexuals. It will be shown, when both of these factors are explored in more depth, that they are both functions of the male sex-role. However, it is first necessary to focus on a theory of a special bond between men -- the male bond.

The Male-Bond and Sociability

Lionel Tiger (1969), an anthropologist, postulated a male bond -- a universal, biologically transmitted and socially learned propensity for men to form social bonds with other men. Male bonding finds expression in a wide variety of cultural forms including formal voluntary associations, informal friendship groups, and work groups. These bonds are seen as a cause, in part, of the formation of all male groups to satisfy the communities' need for action, work, or aggressive groups. These male bonds involve a partially sexual basis -- although, they are not necessarily erotic. Homoeroticism is seen

as a special feature of the general phenomenon of male bonding. Tiger comments on the little available research on the male/male relationship as a relationship in itself. He sees that male relationships are usually studied in the context of some formal patterns such as work, politics, or play.

Tiger's work has been controversial, but only one study has been found which empirically tested hypotheses generated from his ideas. Booth (1972) examined Tiger's assertion that male bonds are stronger and more stable than female affiliations. He attempted to systematically compare the likeness and difference in type, extent, and quality of male and female social participation patterns in friendship dyads, voluntary associations, and kinship relations. The data did not support Tiger's hypothesis that men would have more friends than women. The only group of men who had more friends than a comparable group of women were married, healthy, white-collar men. Booth speculates that this may be due to the white collar youth's greater participation in organized team activities. The qualities of men's and women's friendships differed as well. Female friendships were richer affectively and were more spontaneous. In addition, men had more friends of the opposite sex than women; and, while men participated in more voluntary groups than women, they did not join sexually exclusive groups more often than women. Thus, Tiger's hypothesis of stronger male bonds and more participation by men in sexually exclusive groups is not supported by Booth's data.

Other research bears on Booth's findings across various sections of the life cycle. Olstad (1975), in a study of Oberlin college students, found that males had more male best friends than female best friends. However, these male students spent more time with, placed greater confidence in, and consulted more about important decisions with their female friends than with their best male friends. Komarovsky (1974, 1976), in a survey of Ivy League college males, found, like Olstad, that college males disclosed themselves more to their closest female friend than to their closest male friend. Douvan and Adelson (1966) found that male/male friendships in adolescence were less intimate than female/female friendships. Walker and Wright (1976) studied the influence of self-disclosure on same-sex friendship formation in college students. They found that men found it difficult to talk about or listen to intimate self-disclosures from other men, at least in the early stages of forming an acquaintenceship. They suggest that female friendships are more stongly affected by intimate self-disclosures than male friendships. An interesting finding was that 50% of the male/male pairs refused to follow instructions to talk about intimate topics and had to be discarded as subjects (p. 740).

Adams (1968), in a study of urban kinship patterns, found that men reported less contact and closenenss with their brothers than women do with their sisters (p. 111). The finding was supported by Booth's data where women reported more close kinship ties than men. An interesting patterns was observed by Booth. He found that women maintain intimacy with their parents and siblings as well as with

their family of procreation, whereas men tended to restrict their kinship relations to their family of procreation. What results is that with increasing age the kinship ties of the females declined to a level comparable to the male's which remained constant over age. This is explained by the fact that with increasing age, parents and siblings die whereas, the family of procreation is more likely to remain stable. Another interesting finding of Booth's is that those rich in kinship ties reported richer interpersonal relationships in other areas as well. This was manifest differently for men and women: women had fewer friends but engaged in more spontaneous and confiding activities with them; men had more friends and group involvements, but their friendships were not as qualitatively affective and spontaneous. This findings replicates Booth's finding for healthy, married white-collared men.

Powers and Bultena (1976) studied sex differences in intimate friendships among Midwestern adults 70 years of age or older. Their findings basically confirm those of the other researchers. The males had more frequent social contacts than did the females, but the men were less likely to have intimate friends than the women, and were less likely to replace lost friends. Men's social contacts were limited to their spouses, their children, and their children's families.

Returning to Tiger's hypothesis of male-bonding, Pleck (1975) offers some resolution of the contradiction between Tiger's hypothesis and other research suggesting low male/male intimacy. Based on

Simmel's (1908) original idea, Kurt Lewin's (1948) comparison of interpersonal relationships in the United States and Germany, and the Douvan and Adelson (1966) study of adolescence, Pleck points to the previously noted distinction between sociability and intimacy. He suggests that the male bonding described by Tiger may indicate sociability but not necessarily intimacy. Pleck analyzes the functions of traditional male sociability throughout the life cycle. He summarizes his analysis as follows: "traditional male peer ties serve different, though related, functions throughout the life cycle. Male sociability both models and rewards culturally defined masculine behaviors in the crucial developmental period of childhood when sex-role identity is formed. In adolescence, male peer ties are the major mechanism by which males become psychologically independent from their families, as required for males in this culture. In adulthood, male peer ties provide support for the performance of male roles. In all three periods, male sociability is closely connected with male sex-role training and performance and is not characteristically a medium for self-exploration, personal growth, or the development of intimacy" (p. 235). Pleck, then has reinterpreted Tiger's notion of the male bond to a vehicle whereby male peer ties function to teach and support male sex-role performance and the assured maintenance of traditional societal functioning.

Pleck makes an important point about the necessity of looking at the context in which relationships occur: "It is important to realize that persons conduct relationships with others of the same or other

sex in a context of cultural expectations and assumptions about what such relationships should be like. As these cultural expectations and assumptions change, the possibilities and limits of same-sex and heterosexual relationships change as well" (1975, pp. 235-237). He examines the context of the historical changes in male/male relationships over the course of the last century. At the beginning of the century, all-male institutions -- such as pool halls, barber shops, college fraternities and saloons -- were very important as foci for male sociability. Over the course of the century these institutions have changed and become more sexually integrated -- e.g., the singles bar, or unisex hairstylists. Energy previously directed to all male institutions has become increasingly redirected to dyadic heterosexual relationships, and relationships between men have been greatly deemphasized. Heterosexual relationships have taken over many of the functions traditionally provided by male/male relationships in adolescence and adulthood. Heterosexual men have learned to depend almost exclusively on women for emotional support. The major expression of traditional male culture is professional sports, which men increasingly participate in by watching television alone, and not actually interacting with other men. Up until the last decade, when women's sex-roles were essentially complementary to men's, and women sought satisfaction in their marriage and family, this worked well. But, with women actively questioning traditional female sex-roles and seeking satisfaction outside marriage and the family, the balance has been upset. It will be curious to see if and how heterosexual men

seek to redefine their relationships with other men as male/female relationships are redefined. The Men's Movement is certainly an expression of men's need to explore and redefine their relationships with other men. However, the Men's Movement has certainly not yet reached the majority of American heterosexual men.

Impediments to Intimacy Between Men

The vast majority of empirically based research and the theoretical formulations point to the serious difficulties men encounter being intimate with one another. Men learn to be sociable rather than intimate. The situation then becomes circular. Sociability between men functions to teach, reward and support the performance of the male sex-role. These male sex-role requirements then promote sociability and present obstacles to intimacy between men. Two specific issues predominate in all work in this area. First, aspects of the male role in and of themselves work against men being intimate with anyone. The fact that in male/male relationships both participants are men who have been subject to somewhat similar sex-role training complicates the issue and makes intimacy more difficult. In male/female relationships the partners are socialized differentially. The woman is taught to seek and establish intimacy with both men and women; the male is taught to avoid intimacy except possibly with his spouse. In male/male relationships both partners have been taught to avoid intimacy with each other. Thus, the fact that both partners in a male/male relationship are men adds to the problem of being intimate. The second issue is homophobia. This fear

actively works against closeness between men. Both of these issues are really functions of the male sex-role. It is necessary to examine both in more detail.

Peck and Sawyer (1974) express the effects of male sex-role on male/male intimacy clearly:

> Why have our relationships with other men been so limited? One reason lies in the masculine need for getting ahead. It is in the eyes of other men that we are judged to be a success or a failure. Most of us are in real or imagined competition with other men for the rewards society offers. . . . In most everything we do, male culture encourages us to compare ourselves with other men, and to see them as a standard showing what we should be able to do. No wonder we are so uneasy with other men. The hierarchical or authority relationships among men, which reflect this process of comparison, makes intimacy even more awkward and uncomfortable. . . . Another barrier makes it difficult for us to be open with each other even when we want to. The masculine role, which suppresses emotional expression generally, especially limits the expression of feeling among men. . . . In general, we do not feel comfortable expressing our emotions with other men. Often, we simply do not realize or pay attention to how we feel about each other. . . . For many of us, feelings of warmth toward one another are

> particularly difficult to express. Much of this reluctance relates to fears about sexuality among men. Because of our fears of homosexuality, we sometimes react negatively to close friendships in other men. . . . These negative reactions often have to be dealt with by men who are seeking closer intimacy with each other. But, in addition to these reactions, we must deal with the fears inside ourselves about what it means for other men to be important to us, and for us to be important to them. (pp. 74-75)

David and Brannon (1976) also state the problem well: "It is in men's relationships with each other that the proscriptions against having 'feminine' feelings is most costly, because it precludes having a deeply intimate involvement with someone who might share similar problems. In our society, where sex and affection are closely intertwined, if one gets too close to other men there is a fear that this affection will be seen as sexual, and homosexuality is the antithesis of masculinity. Furthermore, it would be difficult indeed to be supportive toward those persons with whom one is competing" (p. 50).

David and Brannon's reference to "homosexuality as the antithesis of masculinity" is quite striking. There is no way of knowing how to take this statement; are they serious, or are they just stating the common cultural stereotype? If it is indeed a reference to the stereotype, it is hoped that they would have labelled it as such. It

is just this kind of unclear message that serves to perpetuate the myth and the stereotype itself. Furthermore, their assertion that sex and affection are closely intertwined seems to contradict earlier statements by Fasteau (1974) and Gross (1978), about men's inability to combine sex and affection. However, it seems that both are indeed true. Men are given contradictory messages. They are taught as part of the male role to separate sex and affection, but are expected to integrate the two in their marriages, or other heterosexual relationships.

Fasteau (1972) adds support to the difficulty men have being intimate with other men: "Our sense of isolation is also an independent and crucial element of sex-role conditioning itself. We are taught not to communicate our personal feelings and concerns. Most of our friendships simply don't run very deep. . . . Talking personally and spontaneous involves revealing doubts, plans which may fail, ideas which haven't been thought through, happiness over things the other person might think trivial -- in short, making ourselves vulnerable. That was too risky" (p. 20).

Other researchers express views similar to those expressed above. Nichols (1975) mentions several aspects of the male role that work against male friendships: competition; emphasis on intellectualization; the appearance of coolness, objectivity, and indifference; and, the need for dominance and control. Pleck (1975) sees competition and fear of homosexuality as two dynamic issues which interfere with the development of intimacy between men. He sees these

issues as manifestations of two aspects of the male role: the stress on achievement and the suppression of affect. He points out another important barrier to male/male intimacy as well. He points out that men lack interpersonal skills, that they are not trained to be sensitive to the feelings or needs of themselves or others. They also seem to have difficulty resolving interpersonal conflict -- a necessary aspect of all interpersonal relationships. As evidence, he cites a study by Bartolome (1972) who found that men in organizational settings "try to avoid situations where emotions might come into play and to smooth over situations where deep emotions have been expressed." Pleck suggests that this is an apt description of the "male affiliate style" in general. He therefore suggests that men need to develop interpersonal sensitivity and more relationships skills (p. 238); an excellent suggestion.

Lewis (1978) points to four barriers to intimacy between men: 1) competition; 2) homophobia; 3) aversion to vulnerability and openess; and 4) the lack of role models. This last point is quite important and relates essentially to the lack of interpersonal skills mentioned above by Pleck. Clearly, male models are needed to teach interpersonal skills. Lewis describes his intimacy workshops and exercises as an attempt in that direction. He focuses on opening communication between men, facilitating self-disclosure and risk taking, and extending affection by focusing on achieving some physical intimacy (pp. 116-118). Pleck and Clark (1972) also focus on men's liberation and encounter groups to facilitate similar goals.

Clearly, the theoretical formulations advanced have several common themes. Three aspects of the traditional male sex role are repeatedly singled out as impediments to male/male intimacy: 1) competition; 2) men's lack of awareness of their own feelings and needs as well as to those of others; and 3) their inability to share and communicate these feelings and needs with other men -- an aversion to vulnerability.

Impediments to Intimacy Between Gay Men

A basic factor that determines the uniqueness of the gay man's task of seeking emotional, affectional and sexual intimacy with other gay men derives from the fact that he is a man and looks to other men to satisfy these needs. It might be expected that those aspects of male sex-role socialization that act as impediments to male/male intimacy would present problems for gay men in their intimate relationships with one another. Indeed, in my clinical experience I have found this to be the case for individual clients trying to relate intimately with other men, for couples seeking couples therapy, or between therapy group members struggling to maximize need satisfaction and intimacy.

The aspects of the male sex-role outlined above present problems for gay men because their need system for same-sex intimacy conflicts with their sex-role socialization which inhibits same-sex intimacy. In addition, they are trying to satisfy their needs for intimacy with other men who have been similarly trained to avoid the intimacy they need. These conflicting factors will likely produce internal conflicts that get acted out interpersonally. One of the most basic

conflicts that results from these conflicting factors is an exaggeration of the basic tension, believed by some to be inherent in all primary relationships, between autonomy and intimacy (Ramey, 1976; Shor & Sanville, 1978). The pattern of alternating intimacy and withdrawal often characteristic of relationships described by clients, established by group members, and mentioned by Silverstein (1981, p. 187), makes more sense if one understands the opposing needs of the gay men in the relationship -- the need to be intimate and the opposing need to avoid vulnerability and closeness with other men (i.e., a fear of intimacy). As Silverstein (1981) points out, contrary to old assumptions about the inherent inability of homosexuals to be intimate, "It is ironic that many gay male love affairs break up _because_ of the closeness and intimacy that has developed, not because men can't become intimate" (p. 187). It is important for gay men to recognize, and put in perspective, their competing needs, as well as to try to understand the implications of their needing to relate intimately with men who have been taught to fear and avoid the same-sex intimacy they seek. Their myths, assumptions, expectations and ideals about these relationships are based on heterosexual models that do not necessarily reflect the realites posed by two men together.

Growing up as homosexuals and as men, gay men learn to deny significant aspects of their emotional life. Often these men are not aware of, let alone not communicating with others, important needs and feelings. Not being aware of feelings or needs is one reason they are

not shared with intimate partners, but not the only reason. Men often lack the interpersonal skills to enable them to communicate effectively to their partner what it is they feel or need. In addition, fear of allowing oneself to risk being vulnerable, especially with a competitor, prevents the sharing of needs and feelings between men. This sharing, or self-disclosure, is a crucial part of the intimate relationship (Jourard, 1971). Without this information, partners react to each other on the basis of their own assumptions of what the other partner wants, needs, or feels. These assumptions are often not checked out with the partner and often may be an incorrect assessment of the partner's psychological reality. Operating under inarticulated and often incorrect assumptions does not serve to promote intimacy, but instead acts to inhibit its development and to maintain emotional distance between partners.

The third aspect of the male sex-role that creates problems for intimate relationships between gay men is competition which often results in a power struggle between partners for dominance and control. In my clinical experience this is one of the most common problems encountered by gay men. Silverstein (1981) agrees, finding competition to be an issue in almost every gay male relationship he investigated. It is often difficult for the gay man to offer support to the man he competes against and compares himself to. If "winning" this competition is a necessary way of building up low self esteem, then he will need his partner to remain in a one down position and not be his equal. The comparative/competitive dimension of gay male

relationships serves to inhibit intimacy and promote struggle, conflict, and distance.

One of the first priorities in therapy with many gay men is to help them identify, label, and differentiate their feelings and needs so that they may seek to express and satisfy them more effectively. Feelings of tenderness, caring, dependency, neediness and vulnerability are particularly difficult for many gay men to allow themselves to feel and express. Angry and competitive feelings may be allowed more freedom of expression than other feelings, although there still seems to be a great deal of denial and conflict surrounding these feelings. It seems that of all feelings, feelings of sexual attraction are the most familiar for the gay man, and are the easiest to express. It is often uncomfortable for gay men to establish relationships with other men that are not grounded in sexual attraction. Consequently, sexual feelings often arise early in the treatment process especially between a gay male client and his male therapist or between group therapy members. It is important for the therapist working with gay men to understand that these early sexual feelings are safe and familiar feelings for the gay man, and may be a way of resisting dealing with other needs and feelings that may be experienced as more alien and uncomfortable.

Homophobia as a Barrier to Male/Male Intimacy

In addition to specific aspects of the male role, homophobia is most often mentioned as an impediment to male/male intimacy. For example, Nichols (1975) stresses homophobia as the major impediment to male friendships:

> The fear of being considered homosexual, whether conscious or, as is true for most men, unconscious, is a cancer that eats away at our national strengths. Eliminating this fear means not only tolerance for men who are unafraid of taboos and who openly draw close to each other but also encourangement of such closeness. It should be left to each individual male to find his own directions on the scale of sexual preference. . . . If he were not subject to the fears inspired by the taboo,. if it really didn't matter whether or not he were thought homosexually inclined, and if his relationships with men did develop into physical expressions, it would be obvious that it is good to be close to men. It is healthy, and it adds to society's well-being, because it allows men to perceive that they are appreciated by one another not because of winning, competition, domination, status, and so forth but because they are kind, loving, thoughtful, and sensitive; Characteristics men must develop if they are to survive. (p. 282)

It is important to define and explore homophobia in more depth, and to show its relationship to the maintenance of the male sex-role. Morin and Garfinkle (1978) have provided a thorough and cogent review of the theoretical and empirical data relevant to understanding the meaning and dynamics of male homophobia. They offer two perspectives from which to view homophobia -- an external or cultural perspective, explored earlier, and a personal or psycho- dynamic perspective.

From the personal or psychodynamic perspective, homophobia refers to the "irrational fear or intolerance of homosexuality" (Lehne, 1976), or "an irrational, persistent, fear or dread of homosexuals" (MacDonald, 1976). Weinberg (1972), first popularized the personal perspective of homophobia. He spoke of the homophobia of both heterosexuals, who irrationally fear being in close proximity to those seen as homosexuals, and, very importantly, of homosexuals who manifested self-hatred on the basis of the internalization of the majority culture's irrational beliefs and fears. Morin and Garfinkle (1978) suggest the need to differentiate between fear of one's own homosexual or sexual impulses; the fear of homosexuality based on ignorance, lack of contact and cultural stereotypes; and the general fear of difference, as motivational dynamics in homophobia.

Ironically, the most direct behavioral evidence of the power of the fear of homosexuality comes from a study by McConghy (1967), who was attempting to establish classical conditioning procedures to "cure" homosexual men. He invented a "phallometer" to measure penile volume changes while viewing picutres of male and female nudes. He postulated that male homosexuality is a phobic response to women, and that penile volume would decrease when homosexual men were shown female nude pictures. As expected he found that penile volume increased for homosexual men when viewing male nudes, and increased for heterosexual men when viewing female nudes. However, his surprise came when he found no difference in penile volume when homosexual men viewed nude women or neutral pictures, whereas heterosexual men showed

decreased penile volume when viewing pictures of male nudes. This finding of an aversive response of heterosexual men to pictures of nude men and a failure to find an aversive response in homosexual men to pictures of nude women -- fear of women -- has been replicated repeatedly (Freund, Langevin, Gibini, and Zajac, 1973; Freund, Langevin, Gibini, and Zajac, 1974; Freund, Langevin, Chamberlayne, Deosoran & Zajac, 1974; and Lavengin, Stanford & Block, 1975).

Much research has been conducted to discover the personality correlates of homophobia. Morin and and Garfinkle (1978) review thoroughly the relevant research available through 1977. Their review shows that homophobic people manifest the personality characteristics typical of any highly prejudiced group of people and are afraid or intolerant in a great many other social and interpersonal situations (p. 32). Lehne (1976) agrees, he does not see homophobia as an islolated prejudice or trait, but rather as "characteristic of individuals who are generally rigid and sexist" (p. 67). For the purposes of the current study, I would like to focus on those empirical studies which have shown the connection between homophobia and maintenance of sex-roles.

In a nationwide interview study of 3,018 American adults during 1970, Levitt & Klassen (1974) found that nearly 70% believed that male homosexuals "act like the opposite sex"; 22% concurred strongly (p. 35). A 1977 Psychology Today survey of attitudes towards masculinity found that 70% of the male and female respondents believed that "homosexuals are not fully masculine." This large sample was younger,

more affluent, less religious, better educated, and more liberal than the average American (Tarvis, 1977, p. 35). The large percentage of respondents in agreement with this belief, especially in a young liberal sample, is quite striking. It attests to the widespread and deeply ingrained connection in American culture between male homosexuality and the lack of masculinity. The fact that the percentages in both studies remain the same after seven years, especially during a time when gay people were becoming more open and visible, serves to reinforce the notion of just how deeply ingrained this connection is.

MacDonald, Huggins, Young & Swanson (1972) found that a need to support the double standard between the sexes was a more basic component of homophobia than a conservative sexual morality. MacDonald & Games (1974) replicated the earlier finding, and also found that homophobia was associated with a lack of support for equality beween the sexes. In addition, they found that on a Semantic Differential potency factor, "man" was rated as most potent, followed by "lesbian," "women," and the "male homosexual" -- who was rated as the least potent. They also found support for a hypothesis suggesting that homosexuals were perceived as sex-role confused in that less sex-role disparity was found on ratings of homosexual men and women than for ratings of heterosexual men and women (p. 24). The authors explain that the "preservation of masculine-feminine dichotomy may be threatened by the homosexual whom we believe to be feminine when male ('pansy,' 'fairy,' etc.) and masculine when female ('butch,' etc.)

Accordingly, we may condemn the homosexual in order to reduce sex-role confusion" (pp. 10-11).

Morin and Wallace (1976) used a multiple regression analysis to find that the single best predictor of homophobia is a belief in the traditional family ideology of a dominant father, submissive mother, and obedient children. The second best predictor was found to be agreement with traditional beliefs about women(Morin & Garfinkle, 1978, p. 31). Minnegrode (1976) found that anithomosexual subjects were significantly more sexually conservative, and antifeminist than prohomosexual subjects.

Dunbar, Brown and Amoroso (1973) found that high homophobic males had a more consticted view of sex-appropriate behavior for men than low homophobic males. A series of cross-cultural studies investigated the relationship between homophobia and cultural attitudes toward sex-appropriate behavior. Brown & Amoroso (1975) and Dunbar, Brown and Vuorinen (1973) compared homophobia in males and attitudes toward sex-appropriate behavior in three cultures -- Brazilian, Canadian, and West Indian. They found that Brazilians, who were the most homophobic, had the most conservative attitudes toward sex-appropriate behavior; they were followed by the West Indians with moderately conservative attitudes toward sex-appropriate behavior and moderate homophobia, who in turn, were followed by the Canadians who had the least conservative attitudes toward sex-appropriate behavior and the least homophobia. These studies point to the importance of the belief in traditional cultural sex-roles as a major factor in homophobia.

Farina (1972) and Karr (1978) studied the effect of being labeled homosexual on the labelee, the labeler, and upon those interacting with them. Farina (1972) found that when men were labeled as homosexual their behavior changed in a direction opposite from that sterotypically associated with homosexuals and in a direction more in accordance with traditional male sex-role expectations -- i.e., they became increasingly more stereotypically masculine.

Karr (1975, 1978) studied homosexual labeling from two perspectives. Using the Semantic Differential, Karr (1975) had 100 men rate "the typical male homosexual" and the "typical male heterosexual." On the evaluative factor, the homosexual was seen as less good, honest, fair, positive, valuable, stable, intellectual, friendly and clean, and as more shallow and unhealthy than the heterosexual. On the masculinity factor, the homosexual was seen as more delicate, passive, womanly, smaller, softer, and more yielding than the heterosexual (cited in Morin & Garfinkle, 1978, p. 40). In an important later study, Karr (1978) used an Asch-type experiemental paradigm to seek behavioral validation for his earlier findings. Two confederates (primary labeler and secondary labeler) labelled a third confederate (labelee) as homosexual in the experimental groups, and they did not lable him as homosexual in the control groups. All groups were focused on tasks of group cooperation, communication, and perception. The labelees were perceived as being significanly less masculine and less preferred as a participant in future experiments when they were labelled as homosexual than when they were not so

labelled. The primary labelers were perceived as more masculine and more sociable when they labelled the lablee as a homosexual than when they did not. Thus, the same man was perceived as having significantly different characteristics depending upon whether he was labelled a homosexual or not and whether he labelled one or not. These findings are consistent with attribution theory in that how others are perceived and assessed is greatly influenced by the expectations and values of the perceiver.

Moreover, Karr found that high homophobic participants sat farther away from confederates labeled homosexual, and described them as less masculine than did low homophobia participants. Finally, the presence of a labelled homosexual significantly altered group interaction in that high homophobia participants were significantly less efficient at group problem solving when a confederate labled homosexual was present. Thus, the mere presence of a homosexual man is so powerful as to effect the functioning of homophobic people. Karr (1978) concludes: "The results of the study are consistent in indicating that conformity to male role expectations is a powerful motivator and that the label homosexual can be an important factor in whether or not one is perceived as being masculine. The findings of this study support the belief that the fear of being labeled homosexual can operate to keep men acting in accordance with the expectations of the male role. Those interested in changing pejorative attitudes toward homosexual men wold do well to pay increased attention to changing the more basic dynamics of the male role" (pp. 82-83).

Steffensmeier & Steffensmeier (1974) found that men were more rejecting of homosexuals than were women. The men were particularly rejecting of male homosexuals as compared to lesbians. Lesbians were also seen as less of a social problem and less likely to be negatively stereotyped. These findings, and the finding that homophobia is primarily directed against gay men, add support to the notion that homosexuality is not the real threat, but that a deviation from male sex-role behavior represents the real threat behind homophobia. Women who are seen to break with their traditional sex-role are not judged as harshly as gay men who are seen to break with the more culturally valued male sex-role. Gay men are therefore censured because they may not further traditional male interests and power.

The Freudian concept of "latent homosexuality" gives added weight to the maintenance of homophobia. Since latency implies no behavioral evidence, anyone may be a latent homosexual with no way to prove beyond a doubt that one is not. Thus, this concept adds considerable weight to the threat of being labeled homosexual. Lehne (1976) articulates these connections between homophobia and the male sex-role very clearly: "The male role is predominantly maintained by men themselves. Men devalue homosexuality, then use this norm to control other men in their male roles. Since any male could potentially (latently) be a homosexual, and since there are certain social sanctions which can be directed against homosexuals, the fear of being labeled homosexual can be used to ensure that males maintain appropriate male behavior" (p. 78).

Lehne (1976) also makes an important distinction between homophobia and homosexism. Homophobia is seen as one dynamic of the more general phenomenon of homosexism. Homosexism implies sexism between individuals of the same sex -- although they may differ in sexual orientation. It refers to the maintenance of sex-roles by individuals of the same sex. It is similar to sexism although it lacks the power differential inherent in the sexist denigration of women. This power differential is achieved through homophobia which uses the threat of being labeled homosexual as a means of men controlling the sex-role behavior of other men. As Lehne points out: "Homophobia is a threat used by homosexist individuals to enforce social conformity in the male role, and maintain social control. The taunt 'What are you, a fag?' is used in many ways to encourage certain types of male behavior and to define the limits of 'acceptable' masculinity" (p. 78).

I find Lehne's distinction an important one in that it points out that sexism is not only intersexual, but intrasexual as well. It also points out that gay men may be both sexist and homosexist as well -- that is, that they may see women as well as non-traditional, effeminate men as less valued and negatively judged. It also opens the possibility that the "masculine" gay man may negatively judge the "effeminate" heterosexual man. Thus, the concept is helpful in that it presents options more clearly than does the concept of homophobia alone.

Morin and Garfinkle (1978) summarize their research review in a way that ties together what we have discussed before very clearly: "Homophobia thus appears to be functional in the dynamics of maintaining the traditional male role. The fear of being labeled homosexual serves to keep men within the confines of what the culture defines as sex-role appropriate behavior, and it interferes with the development of intimacy between men. Homophobia limits options and deprives men of the potentially rewarding experiences of learning from and being close to one another" (p. 41).

SEX-ROLE IDENTITY AND GAY MEN

Given that the "causal connection" between homosexuality and sex-role inversion is one of the major components of homophobia, it is important to examine its potential effects on the sex-role identity of homosexual men.

The homosexual boy receives conflicting and confusing messages about his masculinity. Through socialization he is taught the requirements of the male sex-role in accordance with his biological gender. He is expected to "be" masculine and avoid anything feminine. At the same time, as part of his socialization, he is taught the homophobic message that homosexuals are not fully masculine but, instead, resemble females -- the only other option -- psychologically. As the child discovers his homosexuality he must learn to come to terms with these conflicting messages in some way.

Each child responds in a unique and individual way to this dilemma. It might be expected, however, that one of the most likely responses would be that the child learns to question his masculinity, and begins to feel anxious, confused and vulnerable about his sex-role identity. This may occur at any level of psychological awareness. The problem may be compounded if the boy did not act according to the requirements of the male sex-role and he was taunted or ridiculed by others -- children and/or adults -- about his "questionable" masculinity. He would likely feel even more confused, anxious, and vulnerable about the issue of his sex-role identity, and even more aware of a sense of difference from other boys. It might be expected that the extent to which this becomes a problem for the child would be influenced by the degree of emphasis on, and the rigidity of, male sex-role requirements in the child's immediate sociocultural and psychological environment.

It is postulated here that the extent to which the individual has internalized the homophobic confusion between homosexuality and sex-role inversion, his sex-role identity may be characterized as confused. Since sex-role identity is an important aspect of the more inclusive ego identity, sex-role identity confusion will be characterized by the same symptoms as identity confusion as outlined by Erikson (1968) -- doubt and shame, "identity consciousness", and "bisexual confusion." In addition, sex-role identity confusion will function to inhibit intimacy in the same ways that the more inclusive ego identity confusion does. It must be stressed that sex-role identity confusion results from internalized homophobia and is not

inherent to homosexuality as has been traditionally thought by psychiatry and, in turn, the general public. This traditional view represents another example of Ryan's (1971) concept of "blaming the victim." The "blame" however belongs with psychiatry and psychoanalysis and not with the homosexual.

The Psychiatric/Psychoanalytic Perspective

Prior to exploring the empirical studies that have measured the relationship between homosexuality and sex-role identity, it would be helpful to understand the professional Zeitgeist and theoretical framework underlying the early studies by presenting a brief survey of the psychiatric and/or psychoanalytic positions on homosexuality and sex-role inversion.

It is perhaps the psychiatric and psychoanalytic traditions that have done the most to create and perpetuate the connection between male homosexuality and a lack of masculinity. It has been by their efforts to create etiological theories, psychodynamic explanations, diagnostic tools, and cures for homosexuality that they have iatrogenically created confusion and pain for the people they were supposedly trying to understand and help.

The origin of the psychiatric position equating homosexuality and sex-role inversion can be traced to Westphal's 1870 article on "contrary sexual sensations." He believed that homosexuality was characterized by "a certain quality of sexual sensibility, a certain way of inverting the masculine and feminine in oneself" (cited in Foucault, 1980, p. 43). This view was incorporated and expanded by Freud during the early 20th century.

Freud believed that each individual was constitutionally endowed with both male and female psychosexual attributes that sought instinctual gratification in terms of object-choice. If the predisposition to femininity was strong, then fixation of the libido at a homosexual level was mandatory, and no environmental influence was necessary; if the feminine predisposition was weak, strong environmental influence was required for fixation at the homosexual level. Freud postulated three stages of sexual development and saw homosexuality -- or sexual inversion -- as a fixation in the middle stage between autoerotism and heterosexual object choice.

The environmental influence he speaks of is the failure to resolve the Oedipal conflict and the consequent regression to a narcissistic identification with the mother. The child introjects the mother and becomes the object he cannot possess; he behaves toward others as he wishes his mother behaved toward him and he gives the homosexual love objects the love he desired from his mother. Freud regarded homosexuality as a perversion, but not a vice, illness or degradation.

Beiber, Dain, Dence, Drellich, Grand, Gunlach, Kremer, Rifkin, Wilber and Beiber (1962) believed that homosexuals suffer from an impaired masculine self-image, a fear of the opposite sex developed in early family relations which usually involved a close-binding mother who is dominant over a father who was hostile or detached. Reutenbeck (1963) saw in the homosexual "a secret longing to play the female's less demanding role" (p. 120). Karlen (1971) said homosexuality was "a result of an insufficient proportion of the male sex hormone" (p. 344).

Socarides (1968) saw homosexuality in terms of "a search for masculinity" (p. 46). The choice of a same-sex partner is seen as a solution to the basic conflict between the wish for regression to the undifferentiated phase and a total loss of self through mother-child unity. Kardiner (1963) points out that "the general contempt of male homosexuals for females is notorious" (p. 36). Rado (1963) proposes that "only men incapacitated for the love of women by their insurmountable fears and resentments become dependent for gratification upon the escape into homogeneous pairs" (p. 119). Hewitt (1961) believed that the most significant factor specific to homosexuality is effeminacy. The feminine component is usually unconscious but is essential to union with other men and provides the heterosexual component without which homosexual acts would be "revolting" or at least "unappetizing." This feminine orientation is first adapted in childhood as a defense against fears and anxieties which are engendered by an environment which presents masculine activities and attitudes as threatening or unrewarding (pp. 592-602).

Oversey (1965,1969), approaching the issue from an adaptational perspective, distinguishes between homosexuality and pseudohomosexuality. Homosexuality is seen in terms of a "masculine failure" -- a deviant form of sexual behavior into which a person is driven by fears of the normal heterosexual function. This homosexual motivation always exists in association with the "pseudohomosexual" motivations of dependency and power. These pseudohomosexual anxieties may arise in heterosexuals as symbolic reflections of a failure in the

masculine role and at times of competitive defeat in a power struggle. The pseudohomosexual represents his weakness through the symbolic equation: I am a failure as a man = I am castrated = I am a woman = I am a homosexual. The homosexual and the pseudohomosexual are differentiated by the homosexual's seeking of genital contact with other men for sexual gratification and thus overtly acting out the reparative fantasies. The primary goal of the homosexual is orgastic sexual satisfaction; the dependency and power motivations are secondary but important in that the relative strengths of these pseudohomosexual motivations determine the nature of the homosexual relationship sought. When the dependency motivation dominates, the homosexual gives up all pretense of meeting the requirements of the male role and is feminine identified. When the power motivation dominates, the homosexual uses the sexual act to affirm his masculinity, chooses men who are like women, and attempts to redeem his masculine failure through the domination of a weaker partner and through exaggerated masculine traits -- "The masculine protest." Oversey believes that the majority of homosexual men are at neither extreme but instead have mixed feminine and masculine identifications dependent on the relative strengths of the pseudohomosexual motivations.

The Empirical Study of Homosexuality and Sex-Role Identity

Studies Using Projective Techniques

The great majority of the early empirical studies that investigated the relationship between homosexuality and sex-role

identity were grounded in this psychiatric/psychoanalytic theoretical framework. These studies approached the study of homosexuality from the a priori assumption that it was indicative of an impairment in mental health that needed to be diagosed. The diagnoses in these studies, rested on the assumption that homosexual men were sexual deviants who would manifest some impairment in masculine identification by virtue of their homosexuality itself. Thus, most of the researchers began with a heterosexual bias -- "the assumption that homosexuality is per se indicative of psychopathology" (Morin, 1977, p. 629).

The earliest studies utilized projective techniques to "diagnose" male homosexuals on the basis of a presumed sex-role inversion or feminine identification. There were two groups of studies using projective techniques. The first group used the Rorshach and/or the TAT (Bergman, 1945; Davids, Joelson, & McArthur, 1956; Due & Wright, 1945; Epstein, 1975; Fein, 1950; Hooker, 1957,1958; Linsey, 1965; Lindsey, Tejessy & Zamansky, 1958; Nitsche, Robinson & Parsons, 1956; Prados, 1946; Schafer, 1954; Schwartz, 1956; Seitz, Anderson, & Braucht, 1974; Ulett, 1950; and Wheeler, 1949). A second grouping of studies utilizing projective indices of homosexuality used the Goodenough Draw a Man Test (1926) and/or the Machover Human Figure Drawing Test (1949) - (Barker, Mathis & Powers, 1953; Frank, 1955; Geil, 1948, 1949; Grams & Rinder, 1958; Hammer, 1954; Mainford, 1953; Vilhotti, 1958; and, Whitaker, 1961). A more detailed examination of these projective studies may be found in Appendix A. The empirical

research which has attempted to diagnose homosexuals and to differentiate between homosexual and heterosexual groups on the basis of their sexually inverted responses to projective tests have produced, to say the least, confusing and conflicting results. Some perspective is needed.

A symposium on predicting overt behavior through the use of projective techniques, chaired by Arthur Carr, was held at the American Psychological Association Convention in 1959. Participants were given projective test protocols of a pair of identical twins, one of whom was homosexual, to interpret. It was concluded that the varying interpretations of the same data offered by these experts showed "remarkably varied and idiosyncratic patterns of handling the data" and therefore the validity of predicting either covert or overt behavior from projective tests is doubtful. It was suggested that the differences in test data interpretation could be due as much to different theoretical conceptions of homosexuality as to the differences in the data itself (Carr,1960).

Walter Klopfer, in discussing the use of projective material alone concludes that:

> Projective material is most meaningful when looked at within the context of the other sources of information. When projective material is used alone, and when the question of whether we are predicting overt behavior, conscious self-concept or merely fantasy, is left unanswered, the reader may legitimately feel that we are

> confounding him with our ambiguity. Of what earthly use is it to talk of "latent homosexuality" or "masturbatory anxiety" or "confusion about sexual role" when it is completely unclear whether we are talking about one or the other of these different levels. Take for example the matter of "latent homosexuality". Are we talking about a person who is extremely effeminate and makes readily discernible passes at other men and whose latency consists only in the fact that he does not actually engage in anal coitus? Or are we talking about someone who has never engaged in homosexual contacts but who is very much preoccupied with fantasies and ideas and wishes concerning homosexuality which cause him excruciating anxiety? Or are we talking about someone who merely gets confused about the sex of the figures in the Rorschach and TAT, and who has never had a conscious thought or feeling concerning homosexuality in his life? (cited in Rabin, 1968, pp. 530-531)

Beside the difficulty inherent in projective test data, there are difficulties in the design of the studies that confuse the data. The heterosexually biased assumption that homosexuality *per se* was pathological is reflected in the research design. For example, the majority of homosexual samples utilized were clinical or prison samples who were often compared to "normal" heterosexuals. Indeed, Hammer (1954) used a group of rapists as a control group in his study

which focused on pedophiles. The fact that institutionalized mentally deficient patients (Vilhotti, 1958), or psychiatric in-patients (Seitz, Anderson and Braucht, 1974) or prisoners (Geil, 1948; Hammer, 1954), or adolescent inmates of a state training school (Grams and Rinder, 1958) were used as the homosexual subjects is reflective of this bias. Although the use of clinical subjects is consistent with the researchers a priori assumptions about the pathological nature of homosexuality, it basically serves to complicate and confuse the data collected.

There is, in addition, a failure to agree on sample definition. "Overt homosexuals," "known homosexuals," "sex deviants" and "homosexuals classified by a clinician" were all used to describe subject populations in the studies reviewed. The results from these subjects are assumed to be comparable, as homosexuality is thought to be a unitary phenomena, and homosexuals are assumed to be similar on the basis of their homosexuality. There is little attempt to understand the meaning to the individual of his homosexuality, or to look at within group differences and the varieties of homosexual adaptations. Hooker (1959), alone, points out the diversity of her subjects. In discussing the validity of projective techniques in the context of homosexuality, she emphasized the minor clinical differences found between homosexuals and heterosexuals on responses to the Rorshach and TAT. She suggests, that rather than trying to determine who is homosexual, more studies need to be directed toward a definition of the character and range of homosexuality since homosexuality is a "multi-manifested phenomenon" (pp. 278-281).

Studies Using Self-Report Inventories and Unidimensional Masculinity/Femininity Scales

In addition to the projective technique studies, several other empirical methods have been used to explore the connection between homosexuality and sex-role identity. A second group of empirical studies have utilized self-report inventories, adjective check lists, and/or the bipolar, unidimensional measures of masculinity/femininity (Aaronson & Grumpelt, 1961; Berdie, 1959; Braaten & Darlin, 1965; Chang & Block, 1960; Clarke, 1965; Dean & Richardson, 1964, 1966; Dickey, 1961; Evans, 1971; Friberg, 1967; Krippner, 1964; Manozevitz, 1970, 1971; Panton, 1960; Stephan, 1973; and, Thompson, Schwartz, McCandless & Edwards, 1973). The Masculinity-Femininity (MF) Scale of the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI,1942) was the measure most typically employed in this research.

Using unidimensional, bipolar measures of masculinity/femininity, male homosexuals typically scored higher -- i.e. low masculine sex-typed or more feminine -- than heterosexual males. These scales were based on traditional conceptions of masculinity and femininity as opposite ends of a unidimensional bipolar continuum. Treating masculinity/femininity as a unidimensional rather than a multidimensional phenomenon, there was little effort to distinguish important from trivial aspects of behavior, nor was there an overriding conception to guide item selection. The criterion for item inclusion on these scales was often their capacity to distinguish between men and women. In some instances, the ability to

differentiate between homosexual and heterosexual samples has been used as a criteria for item selection as well as to test the validity of the scales. If items are selected on this basis, and the scale then differentiates between homosexual and heterosexual male samples, one can only conclude that there is a difference in responses between the homosexual and heterosexual males. It does not address the nature of this difference. One can only claim that this difference is proof of the homosexual male's feminine identification if it was originally assumed that homosexual men were more feminine than heterosexual men.

Studies Using Independent Masculinity/Femininity Measures

The bipolar, unidimensional conception of masculinity/femininity guided the research efforts of psychologists until 1973. Constantinople (1973) was instrumental in changing the direction of psychological research when she proposed separate, orthogonal dimensions of masculinity and femininity which varied more or less independently of each other in each individual regardless of gender. Androgyny was viewed as the balance of positively valued masculine and positively valued feminine characteristics in the individual. Several researchers (Bem, 1974; Block, 1973; and Constantinople, 1973) have hypothesized that androgynous men have been misconstrued as low masculine sex typed -- or feminine -- on the traditional bipolar, unidimensional scales. If gay men are androgynous this may account for their low masculine sex type placement on traditional scales.

The development of the concept of androgyny occurred within the context of the development of two self-report instruments with

separate, independent measures of positively valued psychological masculine and feminine personality characteristics (Bem's BSRI, 1974; and Spence, Helmreich & Stapp's PAQ, 1974, 1975). These scales and others based on the same concept have been used to investigate the connection of homosexuality and sex-role identity.

Spence and Helmreich (1978) report a study by Ward (1974) who administered the Personal Attributes Questionnaire (PAQ) to fifty-six males and fifty-four female self-designated homosexuals from Texas. Their average age was 26.2 years. He found that male homosexuals, compared to an unselected sample of college males, scored significantly lower on the M and M-F scales and higher on the F scale. Further, within the gay sample, lesbians scored significantly higher than gay men on the M and M-F scales, reversing the sex differences found in the college sample, while the gay men and lebians did not differ significantly on the F scale. When gay men were examined in terms of the four possible sex-role outcomes, they found that 9% were classified as conventionally masculine, 18% were classified as androgynous (high masculine/high feminine), 23% were classified as feminine, and 50% were designated as undifferentiated (low masculine/low feminine).

The sexual orientation of the college sample, to which the gay sample is compared, is not commented on, but it seems to be assumed that they are heterosexual. Assumed heterosexual populations may not indeed be 100% heterosexual. The fact that perhaps 10% of the sample may be gay could clearly compound the results. Clearly, if gay men

are to be compared to a control sample of respondents, the sexual orientation of that control group, perhaps through Kinsey ratings, needs to be established. Heterosexuality should not be presumed. The gay respondents were recruited through gay bars and gay activist organizations and the authors do not assume that they are a representative cross section of the American gay population.

McDonald and Moore (1978), using a different measure of sex-role identity, report different results. They studied eighty-eight non-clinical, self-identified homosexuals from five major Western Canadian cities to ascertain their sex-role self-concept, as well as their attitudes toward male homosexuality and toward women. The respondents, recruited through private gay social clubs, were white, lower middle class gay men whose mean age was 28. The Sex-Stereotype Questionnaire (SSQ) was used to measure sex-role self concept. The scale consists of 53 items descriptive of socially desirable personality characteristics _or_ behaviors found to be stereotypically associated with masculine and feminine social sex-roles. Of the 53 items, 38 are masculine valued and 15 are feminine valued. An overall self-concept score plus individual subscores for the masculine and feminine value items are obtained. The respondents were asked to rate themselves, an adult heterosexual male, and an adult heterosexual female on the SSQ. Their findings are interesting. The gay male respondents were not found to differ significantly, in their self-ratings of stereotypic masculine and feminine characteristics, from a sample of Canadian students tested in another study. Although

the sexual orientation of this student comparison group had not been made explicit by the author of the previous study (Trotter), McDonald and Moore acknowledge that they assumed them to be "predominantly heterosexual" for the purposes of discussion (p. 7). As noted eariler, this is a risky assumption.

Further, they found that like heterosexual men, gay men varied as to the extent to which they saw themselves possessing various characteristics of either sex. The majority of the gay male sample did not see themselves as fitting the cultural stereotype of the homosexual male as a feminine identified man. The largest percentage of respondents (35%) saw themselves as falling into two androgynous groups (groups D and E) -- rating themselves on masculine and feminine characteristics similarly to their perceptions of those characteristics in heterosexual men and women. Only 10% of the respondents saw themselves as feminine identified (group B); 10% saw themselves as masculine identified (group C); 12.5% saw themselves as more masculine than heterosexual men and about as feminine as heterosexual women -- this group (group F) is referred to as "compensating": and 10% saw themselves as possessing neither the feminine nor the masculine characteristics of heterosexual men or women (group A) - perhaps this group is the undifferentiated group reported by other researchers. This breakdown leaves about 22% of the respondents unclassified; perhaps these are the minority of the respondents the authors refer to who showed considerable variability and were not involved in further data analysis (p. 9).

The authors conclude that "the finding in the present investigation that the majority of the respondents saw themselves as predominantly androgynous suggests that many homosexual men are healthier and more flexible in meeting social situations than has been suggested by previous research" (p. 11). This conclusion seems unwarranted from the data since the 35% of the respondents in the two androgynous groups (groups D and E) does not represent a "majority of the respondents". Even if we add the 12.5% of the respondents in the higher masculine and high feminine group (group F) to the two androgynous groups, it would only account for 47.5% of the respondents -- still not a majority. Besides, 21.7% of the respondents who showed great variability were discarded from further data analysis with no attempt to understand or account for the greater variability of these respondents. Thus, the data presented by McDonald and Moore (1978) are inconsistent with their claims of an androgynous majority, and if anything, point to the great variety and variability of sex-role identity for this group of gay men. The findings do however refute the notion of the stereotype of the gay man as feminine identified.

Heilbrun and Thompsin (1977) compared homosexual and heterosexual men and women to assess sex-role outcome. The average age of their respondents was between 27 and 28 years. Most were from Atlanta, Georgia, and all were white. Homosexuality and heterosexuality were ascertained through Kinsey-type self-ratings. The sex-role instrument used was the Masculinity-Femininity Scale of the Adjective Check List (Gough & Heilbrun,1965). However, the scoring system was revised from

the original single masculinity-femininity scale score, to allow for independent scoring of the 28 masculine and 26 feminine items. This permitted utilization of the quadri-polar sex-role identity typology: a) masculine, but not feminine; b) feminine, but not masculine; c) androgynous -- both masculine and feminine; and, d) undifferentiated -- neither masculine nor feminine (Heilbrun, 1976).

The authors wanted to investigate the ways in which sex-role outcome might influence sex-object choice for both male and female homosexuals. Given the four possible sex-role outcomes, they made three predictions:

> a) The traditional view is that homosexuality represents part of a more general deficit in appropriate sex-role development and an assumption of cross sex-role behavior. This leads to the prediction that male homosexuals will tend to fall in the feminine outcome and not in the masculine outcome group and female homosexuals will show the opposite pattern, both relative to heterosexuals.
>
> b) Homosexuals of either sex may tend to show an androgynous sex-role makeup relative to heterosexuals. Increased probability of homosexuality could be construed as resulting from the dual sex-role disspositions, which introduce a conflict in sex-object choice.

> c) Homosexuals of either sex may tend to show an undifferentiated sex-role outcome relative to controls. Homosexuality might be a more likely outcome because the person's general failure in sex-role development deprives him or her of discriminative cues which facilitate heterosexual object choice. (p. 67)

It is important to note how the authors chose to word their hypotheses. All three of the hypotheses imply the superiority of heterosexual object choice -- "heterosexual bias" as defined by Morin (1977, p. 629). The first hypothesis suggests homosexuality is a deficit, the second refers to conflict, and the third to failure and deprivation. The authors do not even hypothesize the possibility of the independence of sex-role outcome and sex-object choice. This was however, what they found. There was "no significant difference in frequencies of sex-role outcome between homosexual and heterosexual males." They go on to say "what modest variation occurred between the two groups was in the direction of a lower incidence of masculinity and a higher incidence of femininity in the homosexual males. However, even a post hoc Chi-Square analysis of just those two outcomes did not result in a significant disproportionality "between homosexuals and heterosexuals (p. 71). The sex-role outcome for gay men (N=127) was: 20% androgynous; 27% masculine; 33% feminine; and, 20% undifferentiated. The sex-role outcome for heterosexual men (N=123) was: 18% androgynous; 37% masculine; 24% feminine; and, 21% undifferentiated.

McGovern (1977) compared homosexual and heterosexual men, who differed as to whether their sex-role was androgynous or non-androgynous, on various measures. Homosexual males were, on the whole, found to be more androgynous than heterosexual males. For gay men, psychological androgyny was associated with lack of neuroticism and with healthy interpersonal relationships. In fact, of three measures of healthy interpersonal relationships, gay men consistently scored higher than heterosexual males.

Bernard and Epstein (1978) compared twenty-six white gay men with twenty-six white heterosexual men who were matched on age, education level, occupation and sampling frame. Half the subjects were paid and half were volunteers. All were recruited through friendship networks and social contexts in the Los Angeles area. The mean age of the samples was 28.6 years. Homosexuality and heterosexuality were determined by Kinsey self ratings. In addition, a minimum period of 3 years self-acceptance of the Kinsey score of 5 or 6 was required for homosexuals in order to avoid persons who might be in the process of 'coming out'. Using the Bem Sex-Role Inventory (BSRI) (Bem,1974) and two separate scoring procedures, Bernard and Epstein found that the gay men in their sample were significantly more androgynous than the heterosexual men who were highly masculine sex typed. This was true for both volunteers and paid subjects. Indeed they found that the mean androgyny score for the gay male sample was androgynous whereas the mean androgyny score for the heterosexual sample was highly masculine sex typed. When matched homo-heterosexual pairs' androgyny

scores were placed on a rank order continuum from high to low androgyny, a matched pairs t test found the differences in the samples to be significant. It must be noted that Bernard and Epstein did not use Bem's (1977) revised median split scoring system to differentiate androgynous from undifferentiated persons. They chose not to use this scoring system for two reasons: 1) Bem (1977) reported that undifferentiated persons comprised only 1% of her samples, and 2) the median split method would not generate single scores that could be used in their matched pairs analysis. Bernard & Epstein (1978) conclude that their findings "suggest that homosexual males are relatively more androgynous -- than are heterosexual males. However, the question of how androgyny and male homosexuality are related and whether androgyny has the same implications for the behavior of homosexual males as it does for heterosexual males remains to be examined" (p. 177).

Several comments seem relevant to the requirement of a three year period of self acceptance of a Kinsey score of 5 or 6 to avoid persons in the process of coming out. A Kinsey rating by itself is a self-description of one's behavior (or feelings) and does not say anything about how one feels about this behavior let alone to what degree one positively accepts this behavior. How the question was asked is not made clear by the investigators. Acceptance of one's homosexuality and developing a positive gay identity is quite different than someone who has resigned himself to his homosexual behavior, although both may indicate they have "accepted" their Kinsey

rating. Secondly, it is not clear why a three year period of self acceptance was designated as somehow ending the coming out process. Coming out, is just that -- a process -- and time is not the variable that needs to be controlled. Rather, coming out may be conceived of as a lifelong process -- where one is faced with constant choices about coming out in limitless contexts. The authors quote Weinberg and Williams (1974), without a page reference, for their three year requirement, but it is not clear what in the Weinberg and Williams work they are referring to.

Other researchers (Farrel & Morrione, 1974) have pointed out the necessity of controlling for age as a way of controlling the coming out variable when analyzing the relationship between stereotypic homosexual image and socio-economic status. They base their suggestion on Simon & Gagnon's (1969) postulated connection between coming out and effeminate behavior. Simon & Gagnon (1969) use the term coming out to refer to "that point in time when there is self-recognition of one's identity as a homosexual and the first major entry into exploration of the homosexual community." In their sociological analysis, they found that effeminate behavior tends to appear after coming out and then diminishes with time -- thus, it is transitional. They explain that after coming out, "many homosexuals go through a crisis of femininity; that is they act in relatively public places in a relatively effeminate manner and some, in a transistory fashion, wear female clothing. . . . This crisis is partially structured by the already existing homosexual culture in

which persons already in the crisis stage become models for those who are newer to their committment to homosexuality. . . . The tendency is . . . for this kind of behavior to be a transitional experiment for most homosexuals" (pp. 19-20). Farrell & Morrione (1974) report support for this contention from their own data in that they found that overt and effeminate behavior -- a high stereotypic image -- seems to increase at about age 21 years and then begins to diminish after age 30. They suggest that this is "probably because most male homosexuals enter the 'gay world' during their early 20s and then decrease their participation in it after 30" (p. 435). They offer no proof for their suggestion about age and its relation to participation in the "gay world," nor do they offer any data about the age of coming out of their subjects.

The variables of age and coming out are, however, important variables to control, match, or manipulate in any study of gay men. However, simply controlling for time or age does not imply that one is controlling the variable of coming out or self acceptance and development of a positive gay identity. The term "coming out" has a different meaning for each gay man. Where in the process of coming out the person sees himself at the current moment is the crucial variable to be examined or controlled.

Farrell and Morrione (1974) also examined socio-economic status (SES) -- another important variable to be controlled. They examined the general empirical finding that persons of lower socio-economic status are more susceptible to the labeling process, with specific

reference to homosexual men. They found that, indeed, lower SES male homosexuals more closely approximated the stereotypic effeminate homosexual image, and, as a result, perceived less societal acceptance. The authors conclude that the lower SES homosexual is "more apt to suffer the consequences of labeling because of the overt manifestation of his homosexuality" (p. 438). I must disagree with this last statement. It is not the overt manifestation of his homosexuality that he is being labeled and is suffering for. Rather, he is being labeled for his stereotypic effeminate behavior, which is a manifestation of his internalized homophobia, not of his homosexuality.

Farrell and Morrione suggest that their findings result from the generally more rigid and stereotypic sex-role expectations in lower SES groups, as well as from the greater desire of homosexuals within these groups to identify with the gay community. The gay community may provide lower SES homosexuals with a more meaningful sense of support, a greater opportunity for self-definition and positive sense of identity, and a greater opportunity for upward mobility. Thus, Farrell and Morrione point out an important variable to be controlled in gay research -- socio-economic status. They demonstrate its importance to the issue directly at hand -- sex-role identity -- but clearly its meaning is central to investigating any aspect of gay life and gay identity. Perhaps some of the conflicting results can be attributed to the lack of knowledge on the part of the researchers of the importance of variables such as age, point in the process of

coming out or socio-economic status, in shaping the person's gay experience. Focus on homosexuality as a unitary clinical entity often blinds observers to the diversity of the gay experience, and of gay people as individuals.

Studies Using Self-Reports of Gay Men

Some observers have approached the study of homosexuality from the perspective of respecting the diversity of the homosexual experience. They have attempted to understand the individual's own experience of, and adaptation to, his homosexual needs. The common denominator of the studies in this section is that they break with the medical model assumption of pathology and thus do not represent a heterosexual bias. They begin, instead, with the assumption that a homosexual orientation is a viable alternative life style which needs to be explored in terms of its diversity of expression and its potentiality.

Weinberg and Williams (1974) explored the association between psychological well being and effeminacy. Their composite measure of effeminacy was comprised of the following three items in their questionnaire: 1) I look effeminate; 2) I tend to behave effeminately when in the heterosexual world; and, 3) I tend to behave effeminately when I'm with other homosexuals. Thus, their composite effeminacy score measures the respondent's feeling about how he looks and how he acts in both homosexual and heterosexual contexts. Homosexuals who scored higher in effeminacy were found to be "lower in psychological well-being" on six of the eight measures. Specifically, they found that high effeminacy self ratings were significantly related to low

self-acceptance, low stability of self-concept, high psychosomatic symptoms, high depression, high interpersonal awkwardness, and high loneliness (p. 159).

The authors offer several comments about effeminacy. They suggest that, "A man's natural body-build or manner may be regarded as less than masculine and this may initially contribute to problems of sexual identity. Also, effeminacy may follow from the homosexual's efforts to establish a sense of identity. In searching for an identity, many homosexuals acquire the same stereotypes of homosexuals that many heterosexuals hold, or they are influenced by what in the past have been the most visible type of homosexuals. The result can be their acting out being homosexual in an effeminate manner. Whatever the case, heterosexuals in general as well as many homosexuals themselves react negatively to effeminacy. Thus we expected that effeminacy may be associated with a number of psychological problems" (pp. 158-159).

The authors also comment on Simon and Gagon's idea that effeminacy is a transitional stage in the resolution of identity problems of becoming gay that occur soon after coming out. Their data did indicate that effeminacy was negatively related to age -- older respondents rate their looks and behavior as less effeminate (p. 217). However, when they controlled for age, they found that the significant association between high effeminacy self ratings and psychological problems remains.

It is important to note that their measure of effeminacy was a self-report rating of looks and behavior -- it was not a measure of

psychological masculinity, femininity or androgyny. However, it does measure one aspect of individual self concept, and provides data to indicate that identity confusion (low stability of self concept) and interpersonal problems were associated with internalized homophobia for these homosexual men.

Jay and Young (1979) examined masculinity and femininity as aspects of self image. Their respondents were asked "In general, how do you feel about the use of the categories or labels masculine/feminine, butch /femme?" They responded as follows: 3% very positive; 9% somewhat positive; 24% neutral; 33% somewhat negative; 28% very negative; and 2% not sure. One quarter of the respondents are non-committal, but clearly 61% of the gay men felt negatively about the use of the categories or labels of masculine/feminine; butch/femme as aspects of self-image. In the essay part of the questionnaire (Part II), the men were asked: "Do you consider yourself masculine ('butch') or feminine ('femme'), or both, or neither? In what ways? Which physical characteristics, personality traits, activities, etc., do you identify as masculine or feminine? Do you think others identify you as masculine or feminine and how do you feel about these categories or labels? What importance do these categories have to your self-identity?" (question 18, part 2). Jay and Young point out that the semantic problems posed by the answers to the questions "seem nearly insurmountable" in that each respondent defined masculinity/femininity in different phenomenonological terms. However, they report that "a majority of

the men describe themselves as having a mixture of masculine and feminine characteristics. Of the remaining men, a majority described themselves as 'masculine,' but in so doing many of the men specifically said that when they say 'masculine,' they include certain positive characteristics usually thought of as feminine. A few seemed adamant in their affirmantion of 'manliness'" (p. 929). They go on to say "There are many different ways to define 'masculinity,' and many men feel comfortable with the label, whether it's defined in traditional terms or in terms that are very much an individual expression. Only a few of the men defined themselves as fully or predominantly feminine" (p. 295). The results clearly seem to indicate that the majority of the gay men in this sample define themselves as what might be considered in the new terminology as "androgynous" -- exhibiting both masculine and feminine characteristics.

Spada (1979) asked two questions in his survey relevant to sex-role identity. He asked "How would you define masculinity?" and found that the concept of what defines masculinity varies from person to person and is highly individualistic, leading to a wide diversity of responses. He reports that the question was often cited by respondents as the most difficult of the entire questionnaire. Evaluating the responses, Spada concludes that gay men attach a much looser definition to the term than most and that a new concept of masculinity emerges from the responses. "Many of the men see masculinity primarily as 'being yourself,' stating that feeling secure

about who and what you are is masculine. More than that, many of these men feel that the very concepts of masculinity and femininity are damaging to individual expression and human development and that they should be done away with" (p. 159). The men were also asked "Do you consider yourself masculine?" In response, 75.7% replied "yes"; 7.5% answered "somewhat"; 6 % said "no"; 4.9% replied "I'm a man"; only 3% defined themselves as androgynous, and 3% gave no answer (p. 331). The yes responses reflected the diversity of response noted above in that some men defined themselves as masculine in the traditional sense and others within the looser sense defined above. Spada also notes that it was clear from the responses that most of the men in the sample expressed disapproval of highly effeminate men as well as effeminate affectation in those not usually given to it (p. 160).

OVERVIEW

The data concerning the relationship between homosexuality and sex-role identity is complex. A variety of instruments have been used to measure sex-role identity. These instruments are not interchangeable because they are based on different theoretical assumptions about the nature of sex-role identity, measure overlapping but non-identical constructs, and use different scoring systems (Lenney, 1979) In addition, investigators have made different assumptions about the nature of homosexuality. These factors have

made the comparison of research results difficult, and have resulted in confusing, contradictory findings.

Some features do stand out in the data. The most striking aspect of the data is the great variability in sex-role identity shown by the gay men sampled. This finding discredits the prevelant sociocultural assumption that homosexual men are, by definition, sex-role inverted, i.e., feminine identified. It also underscores the fact of the diversity of homosexual men pointed out by Hooker (1959) and Bell and Weinberg (1978), among others. I am proposing that this variability may be a reflection of sex-role identity confusion.

The homosexual boy receives conflicting and confusing messages about his sex-role identity. He is socialized as a male because of his biological gender and is expected to be masculine. At the same time, he is taught the homophobic message that homosexuals are not fully masculine. As the boy discovers his homosexuality he must learn to deal with these confusing and conflicting messages in some way. To the extent that he internalizes this confusion, he is likely to feel anxious, confused and vulnerable about his sex-role identity. He might become extra vigilant about his sex-role behavior for fear of exposing his homosexuality. This might result in rigid masculine behavior and anxiety about anything feminine, as well as heightened "identity consciousness." Another possible effect may be a gulf between his perception of himself and how he presents himself to both the heterosexual world and to the homosexual world - i.e., fragmentation and compartmentalization. It might be expected that

doubt and shame would accompany his "bisexual confusion." These are just the symptoms of identity confusion outlined by Erikson (1968).

I am postulating that to the extent the individual has internalized the confusion between homosexuality and sex-role inversion, his sex-role identity may be characterized as confused. Since sex-role identity is an important aspect of ego-identity in our culture, sex-role identity confusion will act to interfere with the individual's intimate relationships in the same way identity confusion does.

The gay satellite culture offers the sex-role identity confused homosexual "a program for his homosexual maleness" (Johnston, 1980, p. 21) that serves to reduce the anxiety and confusion inherent in sex-role identity confusion. It also provides a convenient mechanism of escape from the freedom inherent in being a homosexual man in a homophobic, sexist society. However, I question whether this provides a stable sex-role identity for the gay man that would represent a resolution of the sex-role identity confusion. The reaction against effeminacy found by several investigators (Spada, 1979, Weinberg & Williams, 1974) as well as the rigidity of masculinity within the gay community (Johnston, 1980; Kleinberg, 1980; Silverstein, 1981) suggest instead a reaction to confusion and conflict. The "masculinity" valued by the gay community reassures the gay man that he is indeed a man, but it may also serve to cover up confusion and relieve anxiety rather than to provide for the healthy resolution of conflict. Furthermore, the masculinity valued by the gay community glorifies

traditional heterosexual masculine values. These values have been shown to interfere with intimacy between men. This aspect of the value system of the gay male community, while it may serve to reduce anxiety and confusion, functions to inhibit the very relationships that gay men seek within the community. Thus, it may be postulated that to the extent that the individual is masculine identified, his intimate relationships with other gay men will be inhibited.

Finally, there is another important feature hinted at in the empirical data -- a flexibility in sex-role identification shown by significant portions of the gay male sample. Gay men have been found by some investigators to be more androgynous than the heterosexual men sampled, who were generally more masculine sex-typed (Bernard & Epstein, 1978; McGovern, 1977). In addition, gay men show flexibility in their definition and conception of masculinity, and tend to include typically "feminine" characteristics in their definitions (Jay & Young, 1979; Spada, 1979). Support for the notion of sex-role flexibility also comes from studies of the division of labor in household tasks and in leadership in gay couples. These findings will be discussed in the following chapter.

Rebecca, Hefner and Oleshansky (1976) present a dialectic model of sex-role development in which the individual transcends stereotyped sex-roles to an androgynous state by a compelling life crisis. Bernard and Epstein (1978), finding gay men to be basically androgynous, suggest that the experience of coming out may be the life conflict required for sex-role transcendence. Coming out is, however,

a multidimensional process. It may be suggested that one particular aspect of coming out has the most relevance for sex-role transcendence. Society's causal connection between homosexuality and sex-role inversion presents the homosexual boy with a compelling conflict about sex-role identity. At the same time it presents the homosexual boy with the opportunity to question stereotyped sex-roles, the opportunity for greater sex-role flexibility, and perhaps the life crisis necessary for sex-role transcendence. Therefore, it may be postulated that to the extent that the individual's sex-role identity is androgynous, his intimate relationships will be facilitated (c.f., Burchardt, 1979; McGovern, 1977).

That the data on homosexuality and sex-role identity is confusing is not surprising. I believe it accurately reflects a confused community, and individuals, in the process of change, still reacting to old stereotypes and thus still marked by conflict. Being homosexual in our society provides for both sex-role confusion, as well as sex-role transcendence. At this point in history a masculine sex-role identity may be a necessary reaction to old myths and stereotypes. These factors present forces that serve both to inhibit and facilitate intimate relationships between gay men. As the conflict is worked through both on a community, and on an individual level, it is hoped that the facilitative forces will begin to predominate.

CHAPTER FIVE

INITMATE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN GAY MEN: LOVERS AND FRIENDS

The purpose of this chapter is to explore the nature of the intimate relationships that are established between gay men. The parameters of gay male "lover" relationships will be examined, reflecting the major focus of the research on intimate relationships between gay men. In addition, the nature and functions of gay male friendships will be explored. Finally, the relevance of Ramey's concept of the "intimate friendship" to intimate relationships between gay men will be discussed.

Intimate relationships between gay men must be explored within the context of the more general study of the nature of intimacy and the characteristics of intimate relationships. The most striking aspects of intimacy are the relativity of the individual's conception of it, and the complex, multifaceted, and multidetermined nature of intimate relationships. As noted in Chapter One, the data on intimacy are marked by confusion and contradictions. The same is true for research on intimate relationships between gay men, thus the most productive way to deal with these data is to search for common themes or issues, rather than conclusions, from the varied sources of data. Actually, the available literature tells us relatively little about the quality of intimacy between gay men. The focus has been on describing the

characteristics of the types of intimate relationships that gay men have developed with one another. The predominant type of intimate relationship between gay men examined by investigators has been the dyadic "lover" relationship.

GAY MALE "LOVER" RELATIONSHIPS

The data reveal that most of the gay men sampled have had, at some point in their life, a relationship with another gay man that they considered to be a "lover" relationship (Bell & Weinberg, 1978, Peplau, 1981; Saghir & Robins, 1973; Tripp, 1975; Weinberg & Williams, 1974). Interview and/or questionnaire studies of gay men at various times during the 1970s found remarkable consistency in the percentage of their samples "currently" involved in an "affair" or "lover" relationship. Generally, between forty and fifty percent of the gay men questioned reported currently having a lover (Bell & Weinberg, 1978, "about half"; Jay & Young, 1979, 46%; Peplau, 1981, 41%; Phillips, 1978, 47.5%; Spada, 1979, 41.4%) .

The importance to gay men of a "lover" relationship with another gay man is suggested in the literature. Weinberg and Williams (1974) report that "among many homosexuals the ideal arrangement is to live with a homosexual partner, especially one who is loved and with whom one's life is shared. Although not without their difficulties, these relationships are often recognized as solving a number of the homosexual's problems and as increasing his overall happiness" (p.

234). Similarly, Spada (1979) found that of those who did not have a current lover, 87.7% indicated that they would like to have a lover; 59% of the gay men who wanted a lover said that they would like to live with him. Spada concludes that "Sharing their lives with another man is clearly very important to gay men" (p. 197). Peplau (1981) reports, from her research on homosexual couples and heterosexual dating couples, that "whatever their sexual preference, most people strongly desire a close and loving relationship with one special person" (p. 28).

Varied Definitions of Lover Relationships

An immediate complication arises from these data. It concerns the definition of "lover" or "affair". When terms are operationally defined by investigators, they are often quite different. For example, Westmoreland (1975) investigated couples involved in stable, social-sexual relationships in which the partners had sought each other's company primarily, but not exclusively, and who have been living together for a minimum of two years. Tuller (1978) studied gay couples who were involved in long term "gay marriages," defined as a sexual and emotional bond that the partners intended to last forever. Bell and Weinberg (1978) focused on the 29% of their sample that were "coupled." Although a majority of their respondents were currently involved in an "affair" (defined as a 'relatively steady relationship' with another man), only about half of these respondents were living with their partners -- i.e., "coupled." Varied and somewhat arbitrary definitions serve to confuse the data and make comparisons between

studies difficult. Often, these definitions have more to do with the investigators assumptions and conceptions of what "lover" relationships are than with the experiences of the gay men in these intimate relationships.

When investigators have asked their respondents for their own individual definitions of "lover" relationship, they receive varied responses. For example, Phillips (1978) found 47.5% of his respondents "currently involved in a steady relationshp with one other man." These men were asked to describe their relationship: 52.6% described their partner as a lover, and 47.4% described their relationship as an affair. Spada (1979) notes the variation in individual definitions and descriptions of "lover" relationships found in his data: "Some men decribed their lover as someone whom they see more than others; some indicated having several lovers; most of the men . . . either share a home with or devote a large majority of their time to this person" (p. 176). Jay and Young (1979) report that they received "an incredible variety of responses" when they asked their respondents about their lover relationships. "It became clear that there were many different definitions for the term 'lover.' A 'lover' relationship for one couple would seem patently ridiculous to another pair of lovers, and vice versa" (p. 339).

Jay and Young seem to assume that partners in a relationship have some mutually shared definition or description of their relationship. In reality however, each partner has his own phenomenonological definition or description of the parameters of "lover" relationships

in general and/or of his current 'lover' relationship specifically. Difficulties betweeen lovers often arise when they assume that they are both operating with the same definition of their relationship, when in fact, they are not. Clients in individual, group and especially couples therapy, often benefit from mutually sharing their individually defined parameters of intimate relationships -- i.e., their expectations, assumptions, ideals, and rules -- with their partners. This often puts the relationship in a more realistic perspective and affords the opportunity for partners to clarify confusing behavior and correct unrealistic assumptions and expectations. In addition, the sharing and self-disclosure facilitate intimacy between the partners.

It is clear from the literature that there is a wide range of intimate relationships between gay men covered by the terms "lover" relationship and/or "affair." This is true with respect to how these terms have been used both by observers, and by the participants in these relationships as well. It is another indication of the diversity of individual's adaptations to their homosexual needs as well as to the oppression of homosexuality that they encounter. Finally, it underlines the need to be aware of the phenomenological definitions of initimacy of both observers of, and participants in, intimate relationships. Ascertaining these individual definitions of intimacy and parameters of intimate relationships may help to clarify otherwise confusing data.

Biases That Confuse the Data on Lover Relationships

As with the data on intimacy, the data on intimate relationships between gay men is compounded and confused by the observer's -- and participant's -- assumptions, biases and values. Perhaps the most significant bias evident in the work of observer's of gay men's intimate relationships is the belief that sexual needs define homosexuality. Most observers define homosexuality as a sexual orientation, preference, or variation. Sexual needs are regarded as the primary, indeed defining, motivation of homosexual contact. Important emotional and affectional needs are seen as extensions of these sexual needs, and secondary to them. Often these emotional and affectional needs are considered relevant only in reference to ongoing, stable, committed couple relationships. This view of relationships between gay men as primarily sexual relationships is reflected in the literature. For example, Spada (1979) discusses emotional relationships as an aspect of gay male sexuality. Bell and Weinberg (1978) discuss affairs and "coupled relationships" in their chapter on sexual partnerships.[13] They have attempted to establish a typology of homosexual experience on the basis of "measures of sexual experience." However, along with measures of the level of sexual activity, the amount of cruising done, the number of sexual partners over the past year, and the number of sexual problems reported, they include measures of how much the respondent regretted being homosexual, and whether they were "coupled" -- i.e., "involved in a quasi marriage" (p. 132) -- as critical discriminating variables

in establishing their typology. Neither of these last two seem like purely sexual variables at all. Indeed, their inclusion as discriminating variables seems to assure the kind of typology that eventually emerges. It seems that their inclusion as dimensions or measures of sexual experience results from the biased assumption that homosexuality is exclusively a sexual orientation.

In chapter one, I outlined a pervasive value system reflecting the traditional values and ideals of the dominant culture regarding intimate relationships. Underlying this value system was the assumption that romantic love and sex were valid options only for opposite-sex couples. This value system reflects four interconnected biases pervasive in American culture regarding intimate relationships: 1) a couple-front bias; 2) a traditional perspective from which the couple is viewed; 3) a heterosexual bias; and, 4) a biased rigid distinction between friends and lovers. Those observers of intimate relationships between gay men whose work is discussed in this chapter, seem to have accepted some aspects of this value system while rejecting other aspects. These observers seem to reject the underlying assumption that romantic love and sex are valid options only for opposite-sex dyads. These observers believe that romance, affection, and sex are valid options for same-sex intimates as well. In addition, these observers reject the heterosexual bias. Instead, they view a gay lifestyle as an equally valid alternative lifestyle which needs to be examined in terms of its diversity of expression.

However, the basic model of the gay male relationship utilized by most observers is the dyadic unit. This is representative of the traditional couple-front orientation. In addition, most observers seem to accept the traditional rigid distinction between romantic/sexual relationships and friendships. Gay male friendships are assumed to be non-romantic and generally non-sexual. Observers seem to accept the socially encouraged focus on the romantic dyad to fulfill most intimate -- although not all sexual -- needs for the individual. Friendships between gay men are assumed to fulfill important needs for the individual as well -- they function as the focus for the individuals sociable activities, as a socioemotional support group and as an alternative familial system.

It is in terms of the traditional perspective -- the societal perspective which has traditionally been used to define the parameters of romantic/sexual dyadic interaction -- that there is the greatest confusion, ambivalence and research. This research focus reflects the fact that as the social reality of alternative lifestyles becomes increasingly clear, the values and ideals of the traditional perspective are being challenged and questioned within the dominant societal culture. The research explores the applicability of aspects of this traditional perspective to the reality of intimate relationships between gay men.

Many observers assume the relevance of the traditional perspective to intimate gay male relationships. Their research often attempts to refute the old stereotype of gay men's inability to have satisfying

intimate relationships with other gay men by demonstrating that gay men too can have long term, stable, committed relationships. If their data indicate that gay male relationships are not "permanent," these researchers attempt to find reasons within the homophobic society, or within the gay satellite culture, why gay male relationships are "unstable." These observers often focus on similarities and differences with heterosexual romantic relationships and marriages, rather than exploring the variety of gay relationships that do exist. It seems that investigators often look to see if gay male relationships measure up to heterosexual standards and ideals, and if not, why not? This attitude is exemplified by Spada (1979) who reports that it is clear from his data that "gay relationships are just as loving and meaningful as their straight counterparts" (p. 167). The defensive nature of Bell and Weinberg's (1978) overview of "sexual partnerships" is clear: "Our data tend to belie the notion that homosexual affairs are apt to be inferior imitations of heterosexual's premarital or marital involvements." Homosexual "affairs are apt to involve an emotional exchange and commitment similar to the kind that heterosexuals experience. . . . The fact that homosexual men generally went on to a subsequent affair with another partner seems to suggest a parallel with heterosexuals' remarriage after divorce rather than any particular emotional immaturity"(p. 102). For these observers, traditional concepts are used to evaluate, describe, and define gay male relationships.

Other observers do not assume that the traditional perspective is necessarily relevant to the gay male experience. Instead they examine the changes in the traditional perspective dictated by the reality of the gay male experience.

Empirical Research on Gay Male Couples

This concern with the relevance of the traditional perspective to gay male intimate relationships is expressed in the foci of research on gay male couples. There have been four major foci: 1) the issue of stability/permanance in gay male relationships; 2) living arrangements -- lovers and roomates; 3) sex-role behavior -- role playing -- in lover relationships and 4) the issue of monogamy, or sex outside of the lover relationship. Each of these issues will be explored in the following sections in order to ascertain the parameters of the basic model of gay male lover relationships.

The Issue of Stability/Permanence

Cultural stereotypes portray homosexuals as incapable of establishing enduring, intimate relationships with other homosexuals. Statistics indicate that most gay men sampled have had at least one "lover" relationship, and the majority have indeed had a series of relatively short-term relationships. Two pieces of data are relevant here: The number of lover relationships the individual has had over his life course, and the length of these relationships. Saghir and Robins (1973) found that the majority of their sample had had between three and five "affairs," most of these ending within three years. Bell and Weinberg (1978) also found that the majority of their

respondents had had betweeen three and five relatively steady relationships. They offer no data on the average length of the relationships although they did find that the individual's first affair usually lasted between one and three years. Jay and Young (1979) found that the average length of their respondents lover relationships was about two years. However, they didn't gather data on the number of lovers the individual had had during his life course. Peplau (1981) reports that the median number of previous same-sex romantic/sexual relationships was three; twenty-one percent had had six or more such relationships. She found that the median length of her respondent's longest same-sex relationship was fifteen months.

Researchers have often seen this lack of permanance as a problem, and have attempted to investigate the factors that facilitate stability in gay male relationships. These studies seem to focus on heterosexual standards for comparison and often seek to refute the sterotypes and prove that gay men are just as capable of having enduring, stable relationships. For example, Westmoreland (1975) concludes that gay males are capable of living together in successful, fulfilling, permanent "marriages" characterized by honest communication, maturity, cooperation, understanding, love and respect and an equal sharing of responsibility. Interestingly, she found that those couples who described their relationship as leader/follower had higher ratings on success/permanance than those who reported their relationship to be one of equals. Chaffee (1976) found that

self-reliance was perceived by his respondents to be an important factor related to the success of their stable relationship -- i.e., success of the relationship was largely attributed to the freedom of each partner to develop his own personality. Tuller (1978) found that there was almost complete agreement among his respondents on the factors necessary for making a successful "gay marriage": Understanding, love, mutual interests, caring, communication, honesty, openness, lack of extreme possessiveness, integrity, sensitivity, mutual respect, accenting and building on a partner's strengths and playing down his weaknesses, tolerance, sharing, being direct, and having faith in one another (p. 341). Finally, Jones and Bates (1978) found that high success (or well satisfied) couples -- as compared to adequately satisfied couples -- reported greater appreciation of their partner and the couple as a unit, less conflict, and feelings indicative of a desire for stability, such as positive feelings about love relationships and future planning as a couple. Surprisingly, the issues of social support or lack of it, dependence/independence and acceptance/rejection of homosexual identity did not show a strong relationship with success as a couple. The authors conclude that "it is reasonable to decribe the successfulness of gay relationships in ways that are similar to those used to describe straight relationships"(p. 223).

Tripp (1975), approaching the issue from a different perspective, also points to several factors which may affect stability in the individuals's relationships including the individual's early

experiences with his first affair as a teenager, the stability of the individual's family background, and the fact that "most lasting relationships develop between partners who have had previous attachments to other people" (p. 155).

Ironically, homophobia and homosexual oppression may offer an incentive for the maintenance of long term, stable dyadic relationships. Data indicate that many gay men who are now middle age or older -- and who formed homosexual identities before gay liberation -- have been "coupled" for decades (Kimmel, 1977,p. 387; Silverstein, 1981, p. 337). These relationships may have provided the individual with a feeling of security and safety in a hostile environment. They might have given the partners a feeling of being part of the majority culture, by living a heterosexual lifestyle despite their homosexuality. The need to hide and remain closeted may have encouraged people to find someone and to stay with them; often imitating married heterosexual dyads. This is an interesting phenomenon because the stability of these relationships is fostered by a homophobia which taught the individual that stable intimate love relationships were impossible for the homosexual man to maintain.

Other investigators have pointed to aspects of homosexual oppression that have worked against the maintenance of stable relationships between gay men. Hoffman (1968), and Berzon (1979), note that intimate relationships between gay men receive no postive societal support from the dominant heterosexual sociocultural milieu. Berzon (1979) discusses this issue: "Lacking marriage manuals,

parental guidance and models of conjugal bliss on film and television, we've had to wing it when it came to putting together workable love and life partnerships. Intimate relationships are a tricky business at best. Without the sanctions and supports of society's institutions (no positive messages at all), same-sex coupling presents a special challenge to the courage and ingenuity of lovers trying to build a lifestyle together"(p. 30). Her mention of parental guidance brings up the point that gay lover relationships often do not have the support of the partner's families, either because the individuals in the relationship are not open to their families about their homosexuality or their parents have responded ambivalently or negatively. This familial support is a very valuable and important source of support for heterosexual couples. Among gay men, friendship cliques often serve this very important support function.

Tripp (1975) points to factors he believes to be inherent in the homosexual relationship itself which serve to work against the stability and durability of intimate relationships between gay men. He points out that affections between partners last only to the extent that partners retain compatability. He defines compatability as requiring "suficient rapport (a similiarity of response and outlook) to support closeness and affection, along with sufficient resistance (distance and dissimilarity) to support complementation and sexual interest" (p. 157). The problem for homosexual relationships results from the similarity of the same-sex partners. This immediate accord hastens fatigue in the relationship, and leaves the partners

unprepared for discord. Tripp believes "homosexual relationships are overclose, fatigue-prone, and are often adjusted to such narrow, trigger-sensitive tolerances that a mere whisper of disrapport can jolt the partners into making repairs or into conflict"(p. 157). He notes that gay men are not good at contending with, tolerating or reducing conflict, but are good at avoiding it. They place a high priority on smooth relationships and are quick to detect a mismatch and to backtrack by separating. Given this view of homosexual men's intolerance for conflict, flight from the relationship would seem to be a potential result when conflict was generated between the partners. This is especially true in the absence of external legal and social supports for stability.

Generally, research on the issue of stability/permanance in gay male relationships attempts to investigate the factors that facilitate stability and/or attempts to explain the instability of gay male relationships. Stable/permanent relationships are generally accepted as a positive goal to be facilitated. This value judgement may, however, limit our understanding of what these short-term relationships mean for the gay men in their 20s and 30s who are generally the population sampled in these studies. Perhaps, these serial relationships function in the same way that heterosexual adolescent dating does. It occurs for gay men in adulthood because they generally "come out" in young adulthood and then begin exploring intimate relationships with other men. It has already been suggested that an early homosexual relationship may function as a way of fleeing

the anxiety engendered by first coming out. It may be an important part of the coming out process. Perhaps the individual chooses to leave this relationship as he becomes more comfortable with his new gay identity and wants to explore relationships with other men, or perhaps he wants to experience living alone and not having a lover. Perhaps serial relationships, of various durations, are a more effective way for gay men to satisfy their needs for intimacy with other gay men. Perhaps the ideals and concepts have not caught up with the social reality. Problems often arise when the individual approaches his homosexual relationships "as if" they were heterosexual relationships. When young gay men approach their early gay relationships with ideals, expectations and assumptions suited perhaps to heterosexual relationships but not suited to the reality of two men in an intimate relationship, they may become confused, disappointed, cynical and perhaps accept the myth about the "inability" of gay men to have long term relationships. Understanding that the gay male reality is different than the heterosexual reality may help gay men free themselves from traditional heterosexual values which may not necessarily fit their needs or their experience.

The issue is not the length of time of the relationship, but how the relationship is meeting the individual's needs. As Tripp (1975) points out: Durability of a relationship is only one indication, and not necessarily a good indication, of the success of a relationship.

Living Arrangements -- Lovers and Roomates

The data indicate a large degree of variability, flexibility and confusion regarding gay men's living arrangements and their intimate

relationships. Weinberg and Williams (1974) found that living alone is probably the major residential pattern for male homosexuals. Phillips (1978) found that 70% of his New York City sample lived alone; of the 30% who didn't, half lived with lovers and half lived with roomates. Other observers report data on the proportion of those men living with their lovers: Spada (1979) reports that 59% of those men with lovers lived with their lovers; Jay and Young (1979) report that 47% of their respondents lived with their lovers; and Peplau (1981) reports 51% of the gay men in her study lived with their partner. It seems that approximately half of those with lovers -- which is about one half of the respondents sampled -- lived with their lovers. Therefore about one quarter of the total gay men sampled lived with lovers. Indeed, the APA Task Force (1979) data indicates that 26% of the gay male psychologists were living with a same-sex lover.

The residence pattern of the other three-quarters of the respondents in these studies was not particularly clear. Part of this lack of clarity results from the confusion surrounding lovers and roomates. The traditional view of a heterosexual romantic dyad -- whether married or cohabitating before or in lieu of, marriage -- has included living together. While gay relationships are basically modeled on traditional heterosexual patterns, there seems to be some confusion in the gay male community about whether living together is a "necessary" part of a dyadic relationship. The confusion is striking among observers of the gay community. It is reflected most clearly

in the work of Weinberg and Williams (1974), and Bell and Weinberg (1978)

Weinberg and Williams (1974) examined the effects of a homosexual man living with a homosexual roomate. They report, in a footnote, that "among respondents with homosexual roomates, the majority report that their roomates are also their lovers. It should be noted, however, that this living arrangement does not preclude 'extramarital' activity or a roomate who is not their lover" (p. 235). They go on to report that living with a homosexual roomate is associated with greater psychological well being and is therefore psychologically beneficial. Those living with homosexual roomates were found to show high self acceptance, high stability of self concept, low depression and loneliness, low guilt, shame and anxiety about being homosexual, and are less likely to desire psychiatric treatment (p. 236). In addition, Weinberg and Williams found that those living with homosexual roomates were most integrated into the homosexual world, most socially involved with other homosexuals, more likely to have homosexual friends, to have experienced an "exclusive" homosexual relationship, and also show the greatest frequency of homosexual sex (p. 235). Without differentiating more directly between roomates and lovers it is difficult to determine the source of the benefits to gay men of living together. Do the higher average scores of these men derive from their living with another gay man, or do they derive from the fact that a majority of these men are involved in lover relationships. It is certainly conceivable that involvement in a

lover relationship may help an individual feel better about himself -- i.e., may be psychologically beneficial -- because he is living out an approved heterosexual script -- a live-in exclusive dyadic romantic relationship -- "despite" his homosexuality.

Bell and Weinberg's (1978) data also point out the confusion. They reviewed the literature on "homosexual roomate relationships" and report that "The consensus is that such living arrangements often do not include sexual contact between the roomates and that even less often do they involve sex-role distinctions. It has been reported that most homosexual male roomates are members of the same friendship clique but are not necessarily lovers (Sonenschein, 1968), and that they are most apt to be close friends who share living arrangements primarily for economic reasons (Cotton, 1972)" (pp. 83-84). It is certainly curious that they fail to include in their literature review the Weinberg & William's (1974) finding that the majority living with homosexual roomates are also their lovers. It is especially curious since Weinberg was involved in both projects. Bell & Weinberg's own data indicate the complexity of the issue. They found that just over half of their respondents were currently involved in an affair and that most of those men were living with their partner, i.e., coupled. However, only 29% of all gay male respondents were "coupled." Of all those living with a homosexual roomate, two thirds reported that they and their roomate were having sex with each other, of these the majority said that they and/or their partner were having sex with other men as well. Among those not having sex with their roomates,

about half said that this had always been the case. Bell and Weinberg focus on the nature of the 29% of their respondents they consider to be "coupled" -- involved in a current affair and living with their partner. They define the couple in traditional terms, with living together as a necessary requirement of the definition. They miss getting important data on the way those gay men who are involved in a current affair and not living together establish the practical aspects of their relationship -- even those who may define themselves as coupled. While they say that they focus on sexual partnerships they include one third of the respondents currently iving in a nonsexual roomate relationship with those whose relationship is sexual. Obviously living together is of greater importance to them in defining gay couples than sexual involvement or the individual's own determination of his being "coupled." Unfortunately the end result is confusing data on important aspects of the complex nature of intimate relationships between gay men.

It is suspected that many factors motivate the gay man in his choice of living arrangements. Perhaps the simple economic reality of a tight housing market may affect his decisions. It might be that some men are motivated by the fear of discovery of their homosexuality by family or coworkers in their choices. Perhaps others have internalized the stereotypes about gay men's inability to form lasting relationships, and have decided not to live with a lover because they are convinced the relationship won't last anyway. Some may simply prefer to live alone rather than with a lover. For these men not

living with a lover is a positive choice. As Jay and Young (1979) point out: "the choice of not living together is one of the freedoms granted by the gay world which accepts the idea that lovers do not have to share the same house or the same room . . . roomates don't have to be lovers, lovers don't have to be roomates" (p. 355).

Sex-Role Behavior in Lover Relationships

A standard question raised by confused heterosexuals concerning gay male lover relationships is: Who is the husband and who is the wife in the relationship? The traditional heterosexual marriage, with externally defined complementary sex-role requirements, has been the basic model of the romantic, sexual dyad in our culture. As Peplau (1981) notes: "Traditional heterosexual marriage remains so powerful a model for love relationships that many people find it difficult to imagine an intimate relationship not made up of a 'husband' and 'wife'"(p. 32). However, gay men are not guided by external norms concerning what to expect regarding the division of labor, leadership, power, and responsibility between same-sex inimates. Therefore, these issues have to be worked out on an individual basis.

The great majority of investigators have found gay male relationships to be characterized by interchangeability, equality, and flexibility of sex-role behaviors. For example, Tuller (1978) found that all partners in the ten male couples he studied claimed they had no butch/femme or dominant/submissive roles in their relationship. This was true for both household chores -- which were shared -- and for sex. Bell and Weinberg (1978) found little evidence of a

masculine/feminine sex-role dichotomy in the performance of household tasks in the 29% of their sample who were "coupled." Peplau (1981) reports that she "found few signs of masculine/feminine role playing. The lesbians and gay men we studied espoused an ideal of egalitarianism for their relationship, wanting partners to share power and responsibilities equally"(p. 30). Westmoreland (1975) found that ten -- or one-half -- of her couples reported their relationship to be one of equals; two couples reported a leader/follower relationship; and, eight couples reported that their roles were interchangeable.

The issue of sex-roles or role playing in gay male relationships would seem to reflect the behavioral aspect of the larger issue of sex-role identity among gay men discussed in the previous chapter. Perhaps the flexibility in sex-role behavior reflects the flexibility in sex-role identity among gay men noted earlier. This grows out of the fact that homophobic stereotypes allow gay men to question basic sociocultural assumptions regarding rigid sex-role requirements. One result seems to be greater flexibility. Another result suggested in the previous chapter was sex-role identity confusion. This confusion does not seem to be reflected in the data on role playing. Perhaps household chores or sexual behavior are concrete responses which effectively mask confusion, whereas the abstract dimensions of psychological masculinity/femininity would be more likely to reflect this confusion. This remains unclear.

The data indicate that most gay men live alone. Given this fact, gay men are likely to have to learn to do some household chores and to

take some responsibility for their own affairs. Having these skills facilitates flexible, interchangeable role playing when the individual then chooses to live with another man, who is also likely to have acquired these, or other, skills. Sharing household chores does not, however, mean that dominance problems are rare as Tripp's (1975) data indicates. My own clinical experience indicates that while there is indeed flexibility in role playing between partners, the issues of power, dominance/submission, control, and competition are very important issues between gay men in intimate relationships. These issues were discussed in the preceding chapter.

The Issue of "Monogamy"

The issue of establishing rules regarding the individual's sexual and/or emotional relationships with men other than his primary partner -- monogamy -- is an important one for, and between, gay men. It is also a focus of research and discussion. This is not surprising given the fact that: sex is regarded as a defining and primary need of the male homosexual and is therefore an extremely important aspect of the gay man's life; gay men are men, who are often sexually active; sex is generally available to the gay man; the gay man learns to sexualize many of his needs and methods of handling anxiety; there is confusion about the issue of monogamy and open marriages in the dominant heterosexual culture.

The data indicate that gay male lover relationships are generally sexually open. Bell and Weinberg (1978) found that among those reporting sexual contact with their roomates (i.e., about two-thirds

of the twenty-nine percent of the sample who were "coupled"), the majority said that they and/or their partner were having sex with others as well. Spada (1979) found that a total of 74.3% of the men who had lovers reported that they (6%), their lover (3%) or both of them (65.3%) were having sex outside their relationship. He reports that those having sex with others viewed this outside sex as recreational, and saw it either as enhancing their partnership or as not affecting it. He concludes that "perhaps the area in which gay relationships differ most from heterosexual one's is 'open marriages'"(p. 190). Peplau (1981) examined sex both inside and outside the relationship. She found that gay men involved in a steady romantic/sexual relationship with a special partner were generally quite satisfied (an average of 5.8 on a 7 point scale) with the sex they were having with their partner. They reported having sex with their partner on the average of two to three times per week. When asked if they had had sex with anyone other than their steady partner during the preceding two months, 54% of the gay men said they had. This compared with 13% of the lesbians, 14% of the heterosexual men and 14% of the heterosexual women.

While the data indicate that the majority of respondents in lover relationships are having sex outside their relationship, the data also indicate that the issue of monogamy is a source of conflict for the individual, and betweeen partners. Silverstein (1981) regards the issue as a source of conflict between lovers. He believes that "the monogamy battle" -- the question of whether or not to have an

exclusive sexual relationship -- is fought by every gay male couple at some point in their relationship. This assertion clearly coincides with my own clinical experience. In part this results from the fact that gay men receive several contradictory messages about sexuality, masculinity and intimacy. As men, they are taught to be sexually active and experienced; as homosexuals they are taught by a homophobic culture that they are "promiscuous" and sexually insatiable; at the same time, they are taught the traditional perspective regarding romantic, sexual dyads, which values committed, monogamous relationships. Men are taught to seperate sex and emotional relationships at the same time that they are taught that they should integrate the two in a romantic dyadic relationship. Reece (1979) points out the essence of this conflict well: "On the one hand, to be happy and continue a relationship, a man must be sexually and lovingly monogamous. To fill the _gay male_ role expectations, however, he must be sexually involved with different people, often, and good at it"(p. 219).

Silverstein (1981) believes that several conflicting motivations exist within and between partners regarding the issue of monogamy. He speaks of three motivations for "demanding monogamy" in a relationship. The first motiviation is belief in the romantic ideal. This is similar to the traditional perspective regarding the nature of romantic/sexual dyadic relationships discussed earlier. The second motivation is jealousy -- which he defines as a response to fear of loss, abandonment and being left alone. Those more sensitive to

feelings of abandonment and/or those low in self-esteem will be more prone to jealous reactions. The third motivation is envy, which he believes is motivated by competitiveness or covertousness. The lover who is envious of his partner's perceived superiority or success will often attempt to control his lover's life, restrict his freedom or continually change the rules of the relationship. Silverstein expects mixtures of all three of these motivations in many couples. He expects that motivations change over the individual's life-course and over the course of the relationship. For example, he found that demands for exclusivity were more common during the early stages of a relationship; in addition, he found that previous experience in a lover relationship was related to a stronger need for outside sex.

I find Silverstein's distinction between jealousy and envy to be an important one. I have found that both of these feelings are important aspects of the issue of outside sexual relationships for gay male couples. They are often left unarticulated and undifferentiated in the discussion of monogamy, but seem to be important in understanding the nature of the vulnerability generated by this issue. It would seem that gay men, in our culture, would be particularly prone to feelings of jealousy and envy as described by Silverstein. The homosexual may be particularly sensitive to the potential for, and fear of, rejection and loss because of his homosexuality; internalized homophobia engenders low self-esteem; and male sex role socialization fosters competitveness between gay men. These are just the feelings associated with both jealousy and envy in

Silverstein's distinction. Perhaps gay men may be prone to feelings of envy and jealousy because they are both male and homosexual in a sexist, homophobic culture. Clearly they are important issues for gay men who are interacting intimately with other gay men.

Tripp (1975) approaches the issue of outside sex and monogamy from a different perspective. He believes that continued sexual fascination depends on barriers between the partners. Because of partner similarity in same-sex partnerships, Tripp believes that sexual interest between same-sex partners tends to decline more sharply than in heterosexual partnerships. Tripp suggest that one way to build barriers against the problem of the subsidation of sexual interest is to avoid a "fidelity contract" and to make some arrangement for sexual contacts on the side in which emotional investment with new partners is avoided. While recognizing that there are many types of arrangements possible, Tripp suggests: "There tends to be an aboveboard recognition by both partners of the value of what is fleeting as well as what is enduring, along with a realization that these appetites are far safer if not placed in competition"(p. 165).

Tripp, like most other observers, seems to assume that sex is what is being sought outside the relationship. My clincal experience, however, indicates that for gay men, many of their needs have been sexualized. I find that many gay men seek things other than sex from men outside their relationship. It serves gay men well to differentiate these needs and to find more direct ways to have these needs satisfied, inside or outside, of their lover relationships. It

needs to be recognized that men often seek gratification of emotional, as well as sexual, needs outside of their primary relationships. Peplau (1981) points out the necessity of understanding the situational and motivational context of behavior: "For gays as for heterosexuals, that a relationship be open or closed is probably less important than why and how the partners arrive at the particular pattern. Sometimes a secure and rewarding primary relationship may be enhanced by the novelty and excitement of an outside laison. But sexual exploration may also stem from dissatisfaction with the primary partner and sexual laisons can create new difficulties"(p. 38).

Overview of the Empirical Data on Gay Male Couples

A slowly emerging, at times conflicted and confused, model of gay male lover relationships is evident from the data just discussed. These lover relationships retain the basic dyadic model of heterosexual romantic/sexual relationships. However, in order to meet the needs of the current gay male reality, there have been changes in the societal perspective which has traditionally been used to define the parameters of heterosexual romantic/sexual dyadic interaction. The basic skeleton of the emerging gay male model of intimate lover relationships includes: serial relationships of varied duration; these relationships may or may not include living together; they are generally sexually open relationships; and are generally characterized by interchangeability, equality, and flexibility in role playing behavior, with the division of labor equitably shared between partners and seemingly based on ability and interest.

Gay men have retained the basic couple-front orientation of the dominant heterosexual culture to define romantic relationships between gay men. It is generally expected in the gay male community that people will interact intimately as couples, and that lovers will present themselves as a "dyadic unit." Although the lover relationship is highly desired, sought after, and valued as in heterosexual culture, single people are seemingly not regarded as lower in status. This seems especially true when single individuals are members of friendship groups.

FRIENDSHIPS BETWEEN GAY MEN

The rigid distinction between romantic/ sexual lover relationships and friendships, made by heterosexual culture, is generally retained by the gay male community. Both types of relationships are viewed as potentially intimate, but friendships are generally assumed to be non-romantic and non-sexual. The friendships of gay men seem to differ from those of most heterosexual men in that in addition to providing for sociability, the satisfaction of many intimate and familial needs are sought through friendships as well.

Several features of gay men's friendships stand out in a review of the literature. First, the importance, to many gay men, of extended friendship groups or cliques is stressed. Second, these friendship groups function as support groups in place of the nuclear and extended family. Third, there is generally found to be an "incest taboo"

operative within these friendship groups which reflects the distinction often made by gay men between romantic/sexual lovers and non-romantic/non-sexual friends.

Gay men are generally found to have more close friends than heterosexuals, with a greater proportion of their friends being male and also predominantly homosexual (Bell & Weinberg, 1978; Jay & Young, 1979; Phillips, 1978; Saghir and Robins, 1973). Leznoff and Westley (1956) were among the first to speak of gay men bound together in friendship groups through close, long-term relationships for support and acceptance. They studied social interactions of the gay community in a large Canadian city. They postulated that a few individuals were selected to form the basis of a "primary group" which was differentiated from the category of "all others" -- i.e., potential sexual partners. Leznoff and Westley spoke of the "incest taboo" operative within this "primary group" of friends -- friendships were non-sexual.

The existence of friendship cliques of two to five "really close friends" was confirmed by Sonnenschein (1968). He examined the nature and structure of interpersonal interaction in a gay community in a Southwestern American city. He organized the dyadic relationships he observed on the basis of duration (permanent/non-permanent) and whether the relationship was sexual, social, or both. Essentially, he found that social choice varied inversely with sexual choice. Homosexual men, in the community he observed, tended to keep separate those individuals who served their social needs from those who served their sexual needs.

Sonnenschein reports that finding a "permanent socio-sexual partner" was a common goal among these men -- "it was usually only after 'aging' set in (about age 30) that finding a steadier mate became a significant concern" (p. 80). When two individuals entered into a permanent socio-sexual partnership it was observed that their participation in both the friendship group, and in the larger gay community as well, decreased; institutions conducive to sexual interaction were particularly avoided.

"Close" and "good" friendships were found to be entirely social and non-sexual. Sonnenschein reports that "members were fairly explicit in their statements regarding the possible sexual desirability of good or close friends. Most cited reasons were: 'knowing them too well to have sex' and/or that sexual needs were amply satisfied from other sources" (p. 72). The latter reason really provides no answer to the questions of why friendships are not sexual, but the first stated reason is quite interesting. It seems to imply that friends are too close to have sex with. It implies a separation between intimacy and sexuality for these gay men. This separation is, however, typical of American males. One wonders what the implication of this separation is for "permanent socio-sexual relationships". Perhaps there is some need to maintain distance between the partners in order to maintain sexuality as Tripp (1975) has suggested. Perhaps the "distancing mechanisms" often seen clinically between gay male partners are a "necessary" way of maintaining sexual attraction, in addition to their being motivated by a fear of intimacy between the partners.

Further support for the existence of friendship cliques was offered by Hooker (1969) who referred to "the loosely knit extended series of overlapping networks of friends" established by gay men (p. 36). Warren (1974) studied the gay community in a Western United States City and found the friendship clique to be the basic support group of the gay community which, in addition, facilitated social interaction. Weinberg and Williams (1974) explored friendships as an aspect of social involvement with other homosexuals. They suggest that these friendships serve many useful purposes: They provided support in helping to alleviate the stigma attached to homosexuality and the resultant identity problems; they helped the individual become acculturated into the social and sexual practices of the gay community; they provide opportunities to meet sexual partners and develop relationships with other men; and, they provide support for maintaining these "exclusive" homosexual relationships.

Bell and Weinberg (1978) report that many of the gay men they studied belonged to friendship groups or cliques of between six and two-dozen members. They report that both individual friendships and/or a clique of friends are important aspects of social adjustment for the gay man, and provide important social functions for him. These friendships can provide the individual "much needed emotional support, models of alternative life-styles, new objects of identification, opportunities to meet new sexual partners, and, above all, with the sense that they are not alone in what otherwise seems a hostile or indifferent world" (p. 171). Bell and Weinberg note that

the friendship clique "often took the place of the extended family, particularly for those whose homosexuality had brought about alienation or estrangement from their own families. In the cliques of longer standing and large membership, different individuals tended to take on roles analogous to those of different family members" (p. 247).

Phillips (1978) suggests, in support of Bell and Weinberg's data, that "Some of the functions usually ascribed to family have been assumed by gay men friends. It is possible that the importance of the gay male friendship group in the provision of support can lead to the development of an 'as-if' family" (p. 53). He studied social support systems available to gay men in New York City. He looked at which people, or groups of people, gay men turn to for support under a variety of conditions. He found that gay male friends emerged as the primary support group for gay men for all support functions. This finding is supported by data from the APA Task Force (1979) that same-sex friends were the most frequently indicated source of support for gay male psychologists.

Both individual friendships, and extended friendship groups seem to serve important functions for gay men: they serve as the focus for the individual's sociable activities; they offer socioemotional support to the individual in his transition from a homosexual identity to a gay identity; and, they function to socialize the homosexual male into the gay male community. These support and socialization functions have traditionally been associated, in part, with the role of the family. Because gay men are often separated, physically and/or

emotionally from their families of origin and/or their nuclear families, they seem to have structured their friendship groups to fulfill these familial functions. As an innovative solution to this lack of familial support, gay men seemed to have developed an alternative family system through their friendship networks. These networks even operate under some rules modeled on the traditional family system, especially the "incest taboo". This "taboo" may function to control the intensity and nature of the interaction between group members in order to protect the cohesiveness and stability of the group. In addition, I question, Weinberg and Williams (1974) assertion that friendship groups serve to support the individual's lover relationships with men outside the friendship network. My clincial experience indicates that like families, friendship networks often express ambivalence toward its member's outside relationships. I have found that at times, friendship networks work, often unconsciously and indirectly, to undermine a member's outside relationships, because of the perceived threat to the cohesion and stability of the group. The friendship network then, motivated by its own needs for continuity and stability, may serve to control and set limits on it's members intimate relationships both inside and outside of the group.

Lee (1976) offers data that indicates that the "incest taboo" may not be universal among gay male friendship groups. Among his sample of gay men in Canada and England, he found that "One of the important products of the gay liberation movement has been the breakdown of the

'incest taboo' on having sex with friends. On the contrary, there is now a positive emphasis on sex (one or several encounters) as a legitimate and desirable part of the process of becoming better acquainted" (p. 413). Lee's data is interesting and promising, but unfortunately does not reflect my own clinical experience working with gay men in New York City. While some men are indeed exploring the role of sexuality in their friendships, as well as the boundaries between friends and lovers, I find that the traditional distinction between non-sexual, non-romantic friends, and sexual, romantic lovers has been accepted, often without question, by the vast majority of gay men I have seen in my clinical work.

FRIENDS AND LOVERS -- INTIMATE FRIENDSHIPS

In his survey of gay male sexuality, Spada (1979) asked his respondents to characterize their emotional involvements with other men. The responses are quite interesting and relevant to the discussion of gay men's distinction between lovers and friends. The largest percentage of men (54.4%) used the term "buddies" to characterize their emotional involvements with other men. The next largest percentage (14.5%) indicated that the nature of their relationship "depends on their partner" -- this may indicate either flexibility or dependency. The term "equals" was used by 6%; "father/son" by 5.8%; "brothers" by 4.4%; and "lovers" by only 3% -- surprising given the seemingly popular usage of the term within the

gay male community. Spada concludes that the dominant theme expressed in response to this question was that for many men "having a best friend with whom they could share everything -- including sex -- was the epitome of a human relationship. . . . One respondent summed this idea up when he wrote, 'my involvements are as friends. It's just like having a best buddy -- with the extra element of sex added'" (p. 167). In agreement, Peplau (1981) found that "gay relationships resemble 'best friendships', with the added component of romantic and erotic attraction" (p. 29).

Responses from these studies indicate that the gay men sampled want a same-sex friendship which is sociable, sexual, and emotional. They have been taught, however, to be sociable, but not intimate, romantic, or sexual in their same-sex relationships. This presents gay men with a difficult and unique task. Their task is to satisfy their needs for emotional, affectional, and sexual intimacy in their relationships with other men. This runs counter to everything they have learned about the nature of male/male relationships. In addition, to satisfy these needs they must choose their same-sex friends and lovers from the same group of men. Sonnenschein (1968) raises the question of whether people are "screened" through differential expectations to become either "friends" or "partners", or whether friends are a residual category of people who did not work out as lovers. He suggests that both processes are operative -- in many instances there was never any sex between friends, and in other instances, sexual partners moved into the category of non-sexual

friendships. He points out that there were "rare" instances when individuals considered themselves friends and also potential sexual partners. He labels these "non-permanent sociosexual relationships". Given his acceptance of the "natural" separation of friendship and sex, Sonnenschein suggests that these rare friendships might indicate a process of "trial and selection" where those that don't "succeed as sexual partners" may be retained as friends and/or the individual makes a decision as to whether the individual "becomes a friend of a higher order or a sexual partner" (p. 82). That choice need only be made if a distinction is assumed between friendship and sex. An alternative explanation may be that these rare people were innovators who were challenging traditional concepts and assumptions.

Given the traditional distinction between friends and lovers, and its incorporation by the gay male community, it is striking to see the difficulty of the task faced by gay men who are looking to integrate friendship and sex in their lover relationships, and separate the two in their friendships. Sonnenschein's question was a very good one that certainly needs to be the focus of future research. How indeed do gay men, who have internalized this separation between friendship and sex, choose to differentiate between their lovers and friends? One may speculate that gay men choose only people that they are not sexually attracted to as friends. If this is true -- which is highly unlikely -- then gay men are eliminating men that they are sexually attracted to from the possibility of friendship, unless their sexual relationship doesn't "succeed." This eliminates large numbers of men

from consideration for friendship and/or puts tremendous pressure on the sexual relationship since these decisions hinge on its success of failure. If indeed gay men are sexually attracted to their friends and "turn it off" to maintain their friendship, they are using a lot of psychic energy to suppress their feelings. It seems that the institutionalization within the gay male community of the traditional separation between lovers and friends may be a way of providing external structure, and thus escape from the anxiety and confusion raised by the necessity of exploring traditional boundaries between romantic relationships, sexual relationships, and friendships.

It seems clear to me that participants in -- and observers of -- intimate relationships between gay men are trying to apply traditional models, definitions, assumptions and expectations -- derived from heterosexual models -- to new kinds of experiences that don't fit neatly into old categories such as friend or lover. These traditional terms and concepts may simply be insufficient to describe the unique gay male experience. Traditional assumptions about intimate relationships -- specifically, the couple-front orientation, the traditional perspective used to define romantic/sexual dyads, and the distinction between friends and lovers -- need to be questioned, and their revelance to the gay male experience reevaluated. In addition, new conceptions and models need to be developed, or adapted, to help the gay man define and understand his unique experiences in intimate relationships with other gay men.

Ramey's (1976) concepts of the intimate friendship and primary relationship offer a valuable, viable, creative alternative perspective from which to view the gay male experience of intimacy. His model allows the individual to choose or create many more valid options to satisfy unique individual needs. Sexual intimacy is viewed as a potential option for all intimate friendships, but is "stronger" in primary relationships. Primary relationships are only one of the many possible types of intimate friendships, and are distinguished mainly by the degree of time and psychic space committed to the relationship. The individual, in this model, is free to choose to pursue one or more primary relationships concurrently or independently of any number of initmate friendships; or, to choose to have any number of intimate friendships and no primary relationships; or, to choose to have no intimate friendships and/or primary relationships at all. Ramey recognizes the strong pull for sociocultural conformity and the difficulty of the task of challenging traditional notions of intimate relationships. His model assumes the need for the individual to transcend couple-front socialization, the traditional perspective, and the rigid distinctions between friendships and romantic relationships. These assumptions, biases, and values work against creative solutions to complex interpersonal problems by operating to limit "sanctioned options", by perpetuating restrictive traditional values, and by providing external structures to help the individual avoid having to deal with these questions at all. Freedom from traditional assumptions about intimate relationships can help the gay

man understand that satisfying his unique needs for same-sex emotional, affectional, and sexual intimacy requires creating new models and options for same-sex intimate relationships rather than only adapting those developed to meet heterosexual needs.

CONCLUSIONS

Freedom from the restrictions imposed on intimate relationships by traditonal values, biases and assumptions can facilitate intimacy between gay men. Gay men require flexibility, encouragement and support in their struggle to develop creative, unique solutions to satisfy unique needs for same-sex intimacy. I am advocating support and acceptance of a pluralistic model -- which recognizes more than one lifestyle as viable and acceptable -- both within the larger societal culture and within the gay satellite culture as well. The pull to conformity within the gay male community, while understandable given historical circumstances, operates to limit and restrict the individual gay man, and results in the loss of individuality and self integrity. This loss of individuality works against the discovery of the individual's unique needs, and therefore against developing creative ways to meet individual needs. A culture that encourages individuality; tolerance of, and comfort with, ambiguity, confusion, and lack of external structure; and one that supports creative solutions to unique individual needs, would adequately prepare the gay man for his unique and difficult task.

Clearly, homophobia is one of the major impediments to intimacy between gay men. Perhaps the most significant effect of homophobia occurs when it is internalized by the individual and affects his self-esteem and sense of identity. Internalized homophobia works against same-sex intimate relationships in significant ways. To the extent the individual is in conflict about his homosexual needs because he has internalized the homophobia of the dominant culture, is the extent to which he may be said to have a homosexual identity. This homosexual identify may be characterized as a confused identity -- as opposed to a firm, stable sense of ego identity. This identity confusion prevents the individual from establishing truly intimate relationships; instead, intimate relationships will be minimal, or marked by a sense of danger, and focused on genital sexuality, with little real intimacy between the partners. Clearly, the elimination of cultural homophobia would facilitate a less conflicted, confused identity, and thereby facilitate intimacy between gay men which requires a firm, stable sense of individual identity. The development of a gay satellite culture has done much to counteract the damaging effects of homophobia and facilitate the development of a positive gay identity. As the individual develops a gay identity, his intimate relationships are likely to be perceived as less dangerous, be less exclusively focused on genital sexuality, improve in quality, prove more satisfying, and in turn, serve to reinforce and support a growing positive self image.

However, a very significant homophobic cultural bias has been internalized by the gay community itself. This bias works to maintain identity confusion, fragmentation, and compartmentalization, and thus works against intimacy between gay men. This bias is the belief that sexual needs are the defining needs of homosexual men. Important emotional and affectional needs are seen as extensions of these sexual needs and secondary to them. This promotes identity confusion and fragmentation rather than identity integration. In addition, it makes the task of gay men in meeting their needs for emotional, affectional and sexual intimacy with other men immensely more difficult because it regards sexual needs, not emotional needs, as the primary motivation of homosexual contact. In addition, it places sexuality at the center of the gay male community. This supports the separation of sexual from emotional and affectional aspects of intimate interaction, and maintains the preeminence of sexuality to the individual's definition of himself. This view of homosexuality is oppressive and homophobic. It actively works against intimacy between gay men.

I am postulating that sexual orientation is one aspect of a more inclusive emotional-affectional-sexual need system. Contrary to popular and professional belief, the emotional component of this need system is viewed here as primary, with the sexual component an important, but secondary aspect. It is believed that this more comprehensive view of homosexuality, which is supported by the developmental data on homosexual boys, can ultimately facilitate a more positive, integrated gay identity, and can thereby promote

emotional, affectional and sexual intimacy -- not just sexual interaction -- between gay men. It is imperative that the gay male community, and individual gay men themselves, examine this pevasive bias and understand the way it works to limit the individual's experience of his unique homosexual need system as well as the nature of his intimate interaction with other gay men.

Beside the role of conformity and the centrality of sexuality to the definition of homosexuality, it is postulated that the role of masculinity within the gay male community must change in order to facilitate intimacy between gay men. In response to the stereotype of the feminized male homosexual, a negative reaction to effeminacy and a concomitant stress on masculinity and masculine values has developed within the gay male community. This, in combination with the gay man's socialization as a male, has worked to inhibit intimate relationships between gay men. Traditionally, male-male relationships are governed by sex-role expecations which encourage competition, struggles for power and control, emotional distance and withdrawal, little self-disclosure, minimal emotional and interpersonal risk taking, and an aversion to openness and vulnerability. Clearly, a traditional masculine sex-role identity discourages intimacy, and certainly romance and sex between men. Yet these are just the things that gay men seek from each other.

Obviously, identification with the traditional male role will make the gay man's task of satisfying his needs for emotional, affectional, and sexual intimacy immensely more difficult. The pendulum principle

postulates that homosexual men, for so long feminized by heterosexual oppression will initially react against this stereotype wth extreme masculinization of both the satellite culture and of the individual. At this time in history a masculine sex-role identity may be a necessary reaction to old myths and stereotypes. This reaction is viewed here as a necessary first step to correct an imbalance. As the conflict is worked through on both the community and individual levels, it is hoped that valued sex-role identity will moderate and stabilize in the androgynous middle ground, allowing for the integration of masculine and feminine characteristics, and thus facilitate intimacy.

The oppression of homosexuality by the dominant homophobic culture clearly works against intimacy between gay men. At the same time, this oppression presents the gay man with unique opportunities and challenges. For example, having to deal with the conflict presented to the homosexual boy by the "casual connection" between his homosexuality and sex-role inversion presents him with the opportunity to question traditional, restrictive stereotyped sex-roles, the opportunity for greater sex-role flexibility, and perhaps for sex-role transcendence. In addition, growing up as homosexual in a homophobic environment and trying to satisfy one's needs for emotional, affectional and sexual intimacy with other men against external constraints and internalized ambivalences, provides the gay men with other unique challenges and opportunities for freedom: to free himself from internalized homophobia and develop a positive gay

identity through his intimate relationships with other gay men and a supportive gay male community: to question and reevaluate traditional restrictive and biased conceptions of intimacy between men; to explore and reevaluate traditional conceptions and boundaries between romantic relationships, sexual relationships, and friendships; and to work actively to meet invidividual needs for intimate relationships with other gay men in unique creative ways.

This freedom from traditional structure, or freedom to create new structure, produces tremendous anxiety and adds to feelings of confusion, doubt, isolation, and alienation in men who are seeking relief from just these same feelings. The gay male community has offered the individual gay man external structure, and thus relief from the confusion and anxiety arising from his opportunity to question basic sociocultural assumptions, and inherent in his oppression as a homosexual male. Those aspects of the gay male satellite culture that function as mechanisms of escape from this freedom are detrimental to the development of a creative individual gay identity and ultimately to the development and maintenance of intimate relationships between gay men.

Escape from freedom need not necessarily be the only alternative. Gay men are in a unique socio-cultural position and therefore face unique challenges and have unique opportunities. Meeting these challenges and taking advantage of these opportunities requires the changes in the gay male community outlined above -- questioning old biases, values and assumptions; reevaluating traditional models of

intimate relationships and assessing their relevance to the gay male experience; re-evaluating traditional notions of homosexuality; working to eliminate homophobia; acceptance of a pluralistic model of intimate relationships; encouraging individuality rather than conformity; encouraging tolerance for and comfort with, ambiguity, confusion, and the lack of external structure; as well as support for developing creative solutions to satisfy unique individual intimate needs. The task of fulfilling intimate needs for gay men is unique and difficult. However, it is a task that provides a unique opportunity and challenge to go beyond restrictive biases and rigid distinctions in order to satisfy the unique needs of gay men for same-sex intimacy in creative ways. I am fully convinced that the gay male community has the collective strength and energy necessary to meet these challenges effectively and creatively. I hope that the potential for growth and change inherent in the unique socio-cultural position of the gay male community is realized, and that this opportunity to develop new, creative models of intimate relationships is embraced.

FOOTNOTES

Introduction

1
From a cultural perspective, homophobia is defined as " any belief system which supports negative myths and stereotypes about homosexual people" (Morin & Garfinkle, 1978, p.30). From an individual or psychodynamic perspective, homophobia refers to the " irrational fear or intolerance of homosexuality " (Lehne, 1976).

2
Integrating various views presented at a Symposium on the meaning of intimacy in the Spring of 1974, Raush (1977) points to six themes which emerge as recurrent matters of concern to the participants. All of these themes will be touched upon in the current study. These themes, posed as questions, are: a) how do historical and sociocultural factors affect the nature of intimate relationships and how we conceive of them?; b) what are the external and internal constraints on intimate relationships?; c)how do our biases, values, and assumptions -- either as participants in, or observers of, intimate relationships within a specific sociocultural milieu -- affect our conceptions of these relationships? ; d) what is our conceptual and/or observational unit of analysis-- the individual, the intimate dyad, the extended group, or the total community ?; e) what is the observer's perspective -- how does it influence the research and results ?; and, f) what dimensions best contribute to the study of intimate relationships? What range of relationships is to be included and what specific variables are to be studied? (p.163-164).

Chapter One

3
Bard applied the term and concept -- iatrogenic -- to police intervention in family crises (Bard, 1970,1971) and to police management of other interpersonal conflict situations as well (Bard, Zacker & Rutter, 1972).

4
In January 1975, the American Psychological Association supported the action of the American Psychiatric Association when they adopted the following resolution:

> Homosexuality per se implies no impairment in judgment, stability, reliability, or general social or vocational capabilities:
>
> Further, the American Psychological Association urges all mental health professionals to take the lead in removing the stigma of mental illness that has long been associated with homosexual orientations.
> (Final Report, Task Force On The Status Of Lesbian And Gay Male Psychologists, 1979, p.2)

Chapter Two

5

There are two important differences between homosexuals and most other deviant or stigmatized groups. Goffman (1963) addresses the first difference in his distinction between "the discredited" - who have a visible mark of their stigma - and"the discreditable" - whose "failing" is not visible until it is revealed. Homosexuals are included in the "discreditable" category. Their main task is to manage information about their "failing"; "To display, or not to display; to tell or not to tell; to let on or not to let on; to lie or not to lie; and in each case, to whom, how, when, and where" (p.42).Altman (1971) speaks to this issue : "Gayness is not something, like skin color, or sex, or infirmity, immediately apparent to both us and others. We have to discover our homosexuality, and having discovered it, we have awide range of options, hardly available to others who are stigmatized, as to how far we should reveal our stigma" (p.14). Gay men, then, have some degree of choice and control over how, when, and if they disclose their homosexual identities to others. They can choose to hide their "stigma", and"pass as straight", thereby retaining the status and privileges of heterosexual men in our society.

The second important difference between homosexuals and other stigmatized or deviant groups relates to the fact that homosexuality is not a stigma generally shared by other family members. Therefore, one of the most significant areas of choice for the homosexual is the degree to which he shares knowledge of his homosexuality with his family. Altman (1971) addresses the risk inherent in this difficult conflict for homosexuals: " if we disclose our homosexuality to our parents, we will risk anger and pain; yet if we hide it, we must drift apart, avoiding any contact that might uncover our essential selves" (p.40). Often the solution to this dilemma is complex, with the homosexual sharing and disclosing

differing amounts and aspects of information about their lives with different family members. Conflicts about "coming out" to family and on the job are two of the most significant problems faced by gay people in our homophobic society.

6

For a more thorough exploration of the events and politics surrounding the American Psychiatric Association's decision to remove homosexuality from it's official list of mental disorders (DSM II), the reader is referred to: Bayer, R. Homosexuality and American Psychiatry: The politics of diagnosis. New York: Basic Books, 1981.

Chapter Three

7

It is suspected that the specific aspects of homophobia stressed by the child's particular enviroment will likely be the focus of his own conflicts about his homosexuality. For example: a strict religious upbringing may facilitate the child's internalization of conflicts regarding the immorality and sinfulness of his homosexuality; a lower class, urban child who has been verbally taunted by his peers, and repeatedly called "fairy" or "sissy", may internalize conflicts and confusion primarily about his gender and sex-role identity; or, finally, a child from an educated, higher socioeconomic milieu may internalize conflicts predominantly about his psychological well-being and the psychopathology or illness of his homosexuality. It is suspected that the child's internalized conflicts about his homosexuality may revolve around several of these elements concurrently, reflecting the multifaceted and pervasive nature of homophobia in our society.

8

Dank (1971) points to the importance of knowledge of, and information about homosexuals and homosexuality in the process of coming out. "The commitment to a homosexual identity cannot occur in an enviroment where the cognitive category of homosexual does not exist" (p.130). The type of information available to the individual is also an important variable. In an enviroment where information about homosexuality is " presented in a highly negative manner, a person who is sexually attracted to persons of the same sex will probably view himself as sick, mentally ill, or queer" (p.130).Thus, the more traditionally negative and stereotyped the information the child receives about homosexuality, the more likely it is

that it will affect his self-esteem, and cause conflict and confusion for him about his homosexual needs.

Chapter Four

9

In addition to these three major approaches, several new conceptions of sex-role development have been offered: the model for "gender identity differentiation and dimorphism" (Money and Ehrhart, 1972); a three stage sex-role transcendence model (Rebecca, Hefner and Oleshansky, 1976); a phasic model of sex-role trascendence (Pleck, 1975); and, a symbolic-learning process model (Pleck,1975). While an understanding of sex-role development would be helpful in understanding the psychological development of homosexual men, an exploration and discussion of the various theories of sex-role development is beyond the scope of the current study.

10

Pleck and Sawyer (1974) note that:

> We know that gay males were the first to articulate the psychic costs exacted from males whose behavior does not match the traditional masculine requirements. Gay males were the first to challenge the legitimacy of these prescriptions for masculinity, and were also the first to explore how collective action and mutual support could loosen their hold on men. (P.2)

11

Pleck (1976) notes four current perspectives concerning the effects on the individual of contradictions and strains in the male sex-role. Two -- the individual and the cultural sex-role identity perspectives -- view the traditional male role as desirable and focus on the difficulties in attaining male role behaviors and traits; two other perspectives -- the

contradictory socialization role strain, and, the inherent role strain perspectives -- question the content of traditional and modern male sex-roles, and examine the contradictions and the strains inherent in the role itself. An exploration of these perspectives and of the more general issue are beyond the scope of the current study.

12

One example of the fall in status and prestige following the public display of emotion by a man occurred during the 1972 New Hampshire Presidential Primary. Former Senator and Secretary of State Edmund Muskie began to cry while countering a published attack on his wife. His crying created speculation about his emotional stability under pressure, and ultimately led to the collapse of his campaign for the Democratic presidential nomination in 1972 (Farrell, 1974, p.51-52). In a recent interview, reported in the New York Times (April 30, 1980, p.A14, col.3-4), Muskie commented on the incident, he said he had " been choked up over my anger...It changed people's minds about me ... of what kind of guy I was. They were looking for a strong, steady man, and here I was weak." This politically powerful and influential man reconfirms the traditional view of the necessity of male emotional control, and condemns himself as weak and unsteady because he publicly displayed his feelings. Obviously, loss of self-esteem is a possible concomitant of loss of status and prestige before other men, for public displays of emotion. The relative recency of the interview with Muskie belies the strong hold that this aspect of the male role still has on American men.

13

Bell and Weinberg's Homosexualities : A Study of Diversity Among Men and Women (1978), is a report on data collected from 1500 interviews conducted with lesbians and gay men in the San Francisco Bay Area in 1970. In order to examine the diversity of "homosexualities" -- a primary focus of their study -- the authors created a typology of homosexuals based on an analysis of the respondent's "sexual experiences". Five major groups of homosexuals emerged: closed-coupled; open-coupled; functional; dysfunctional; and, asexual. Bell and Weinberg compared the ways in which homosexual persons differed from each other, and from a matched heterosexual sample, in their social and psychological adjustment.

The "closed-coupleds" (10% of all respondents) showed " superior adjustment"; the partners were closely bound together and tended to look to each other, rather than to outsiders, for sexual and interpersonal satisfactions. "Open-coupleds" (18% of all respondents) were the modal type among the males. They were living with a "special sexual partner", but were not happy with the circumstances and sought satisfaction with people outside their partnership. "Functionals" (15% of all respondents) showed "good adjustment"; they are described as "energetic and self-reliant, cheerful and optimistic, and comfortable with their highly emphasized sexuality"."Dysfunctionals" (12% of all respondents) were "troubled people whose lives offered them little gratification, and in fact they seem to have a great deal of difficulty managing their existence . They most resemble the stereotype of homosexuals as "conflict-ridden social misfits". "Asexuals" (16% of all respondents) most prominent characteristic

was their lack of involvement with others. They were "not very interested in establishing a relationship with a special partner or in any of the rewards the gay world might offer them... The Asexual life-style is a solitary one" (p 219-228: 346).

A major problem with the Bell and Weinberg data arises from the fact that only 71% of the homosexual male sample were assigned to one of the five types: 29% of the sample did not meet the criteria for inclusion in any one of the "pure" types, and were excluded from further data analysis. Therefore, there is no data on the social and psychological adjustment of those men who were not assigned to one of the five types. These men represent a larger proportion of the sample than is included in any one of the five types -- quite a sizable percentage of the sample to exclude from the data analysis. For a truly helpful typology of homosexual experience it would have been necessary to examine the social and psychological characteristics of those men excluded by Bell and Weinberg.

APPENDIX A

THE EMPIRICAL STUDY OF HOMOSEXUALITY AND SEX-ROLE IDENTITY

Studies Using Projective Techniques

The are two grouping of studies using projective techniques. The first group used the Rorschach and the TAT.

Rorschach and TAT Studies

Bergmann (1945), using the Rorschach, found that homosexual soldiers gave a higher percentage of sexual responses, revealing heterosexual revulsion, homosexual arousal, and a reluctance to positively distinguish between male and male figures (pp. 78-83). Due and Wright (1945) found that derealization, confusion of sexual identification, feminine identification and castration and phallic symbolism characterized the Rorschach responses of male homosexuals (pp. 169-177). A similar result was found by Prados (1946). Wheeler (1949), using the "Wheeler content signs test" of twenty signs on the Rorschach, found that a picture of the male homosexual would be a somewhat paranoid individual with derogatory attitudes toward people, especially women, which is accompanied by a feminine identification (pp. 97-126). Fein (1950) identified the following responses on the Rorschach as homosexual indicators: responses about feminine apparel and behavior, men with feminine attributes, men with sex aversion, and references to males & females in symmetrical blot areas; however, feminine gender responses were not indicators of homosexuality (pp. 248-253).

Nitsche, Robinson and Parsons (1956) used twelve (12) content categories on the Rorshach to distinguish the protocols of homosexuals and heterosexuals. While homosexuals had more responses in nine of the twelve categories, none of the differences were statistically significant (p. 196). Hooker (1958) investigated the diagnosis of homosexuality from the Rorschach protocols of 30 non-clinical male homosexuals using clinical judgments, the Wheeler content signs, and Schafer's content theme signs. The results were mixed -- some homosexual records -- where anal orientation and feminine emphasis were evident -- could be distinguished, but most could not (pp. 33-54). Seitz, Anderson, and Braucht (1974) noted that previous research had produced conflicting results, neither supporting nor refuting the usefulness of content analysis of the Rorschach as a tool in diagnosing homosexuality. They pointed out one compounding variable which may have blurred the difference between homosexual and heterosexual groups -- i.e., the influence of generalized sex-role disturbances which are not manifest in overt homosexual bahavior. In their study, they compared five sets of Rorschach signs within a three group design of heterosexual, sex-role disturbed, and homosexual psychiatric patients. Sex-role disturbed subjects were classified on the basis of marital disturbance and the patient's expressed doubts about his ability to function adequately in the male role. The five sets of Rorschach signs they investigated were those proposed by Due and Wright, 1945; Fine, 1950; Shafer, 1954; Ulett, 1950; and Wheeler, 1949. All five sets of signs were able to distinguish the protocols

of the homosexual and heterosexual groups, but only the Schafer and Ulett signs discriminated between homosexual and sex-role disturbed groups of psychiatric in-patients (pp. 1163-1169).

Other studies used the TAT to differentiate homosexual and heterosexual groups. Schwartz (1956) tested two hypotheses derived from the psychoanalytic theory of castration anxiety by comparing TAT sign scores from homosexual subjects and "normal" controls. He found that overt homosexual males showed more intense castration anxieties than "normal" males, and that males showed more intense castration anxiety than women (pp. 318-327). Lindsey, Tejessy, and Zamansky (1958) found nine out of twenty objective indices which were significant as indicators of homosexuality on the TAT. Those indices included feminine identification, man killing woman, unstable identification, shallow heterosexual relations, derogatory sexual terms applied to women, and homosexual content. A judge was able to separate protocols into homosexual and "normal" groups with 95% success (pp. 67-75). Lindsey (1965), in a study comparing clinical and acctuarial prediction, also found that clinicians were able to classify TAT protocols according to sexual orientation with 95% accuracy. However, he found that twenty objective TAT indices were not as clearly predictive (pp. 17-26).

Epstein (1975) compared the sex role conceptions of gay and heterosexual men by using a TAT-type projective measure. He compared the amount of projection of both gay and heterosexual men to both masculine and feminine pictorial stimuli. He found no significant

difference in the amount of projection given by the gay and the heterosexual men on either the masculine or feminine stimuli.

Two studies used both the Rorschach and the TAT. Davids, Joelson and McArthur (1956) administered the Rorschach and the TAT to a group of overt homosexuals, a group of neurotics and a control group -- all university students. They found that the homosexual group gave a greater mean number of proposed homosexual Rorschach and TAT signs than either of the non-homosexual groups. In addition, correlations between the number of homosexual Rorschach and homosexual TAT signs, within the homosexual group, proved significant. They note, however, that there is danger in expecting these signs to be the sole diagnostic indicators of homosexuality (pp. 161-172). Finally, Hooker (1957) had two judges independently review Rorschach protocols, TAT responses, and Make A Picture Story responses. They judged the subject's adjustment and attempted to distinguish homosexuals from heterosexuals on the basis of the test protocols. The two groups did not differ significantly in the adjustment ratings they received on the basis of their test protocols, and the homosexuals could not be distinguished from the heterosexuals.

Projective Drawing Test Studies

A second grouping of projective indices of homosexuality utilized the Goodenough Draw a Man Test (1926) and the Machover Human Figure Drawing Test (1949). In an early study, Geil (1948) found that nearly half of the known homosexuals in a Federal Prison projected feminine characteristics onto their male figure drawings on the Goodenough Draw

a Man Test (pp. 62-82). Geil (1949), again using the Goodenough test, found that many "sex deviants" projected their homosexual tendencies in their drawings of a male adult figure by drawing a man with feminine characterisics -- defined here as slight body size and the presence of breasts. Geil acknowledges that this is not true for all male homosexuals and suggests a female component in those that do (pp. 307-321).

Machover's early work with the Human Figure Drawing Test (1949) outlined fifteen signs in human figure drawings as predictive of homosexuality, including a propensity for male homosexuals to draw the opposite sex first when instructed to draw a person. Many of the subsequent studies tested this hypothesis. Barker, Mathis and Powers (1953), using the Machover test, found no propensity to draw a female figure first among homosexual soldiers. Nor did the homosexual group give female characteristics to their male figures. They did find a distortion of the female figure in the homosexual's drawings as well as a delay in the identification of the self-sex figure (pp. 185-188). Mainford (1953) also tested the hypothesis of first sex drawings as an indication of sexual orientation by comparing college students and patients in a hospital. On the basis of her results that 94.7% of the male students and <u>only</u> 82.3% of the male hospital patients drew a male figure first, she suggests that the sign might be a valid one when considering the drawings of males (pp. 188-189). Her conclusion is utterly amazing.

Hammer (1954), finding conflicting results from previous studies, attempted to retest the hypothesis that the first drawn person may be used as an index of sexual orientation. He used sex offenders at Sing-Sing Prison as his subjects. He compared a group of rapists -- which he used as a control group — to a group of heterosexual pedophiles and a group of homosexual pedophiles. No significant difference was found between the rapists and the pedophile groups. He concluded that "considerable doubt is cast on the projective drawing postulate that the sex of the first figure drawn may serve as an index of the subject's sexual identification or as evidence of psychosexual conflicts of sexual inversion (pp. 168-170).

Frank (1955) tested Machover's hypothesis by observing the performance of "normals" who did not show any "observable problems of homosexuality." He found that 90% of the males and 68% of the females drew their own sex first. This he says, supported Machover's hypothesis since if people without "observable problems" in sexual identification draw their own sex first, then those who draw the opposite sex first are deviating from the norm. The fact that 32% of the women drew men first was explained by the more positive male sex role with which women in our society may identify (pp. 137-138).

Grams and Rinder (1958), to test the validity of the fifteen predictive signs postulated by Machover, had 50 adolescent subjects, who were inmates of a state training school, draw a person and then another person of the opposite sex. Three psychologists rated the drawings on the predictive homosexual signs and found that none of the

signs, either individually, or collectively, had any predictive validity (p. 394). Vilhotti (1958) compared mentally deficient male homosexuals with non-homosexual mentally deficient males, and found that the criteria of drawing a female figure first as diagnostic of homosexuality was not useful in differentiating homosexual and non-homosexual groups of institutionalized mental deficients (pp. 708-711). Finally, Whitaker (1961) studied men referred through a court clinic and classified by a psychologist as either heterosexual or homosexual, and as either effeminate or non-effeminate. He found that the hypothesis that psychosexual identity is projected into the first free choice drawings was supported, but that the psychometric signs were not more efficient than the clinical ratings of the psychologist in predicting homosexual or effeminate characteristis (pp. 482-485).

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