Mattachine Review

Dr. Edmund Bergler

Samples Twice Sifted
...a Symposium

If the cat can look at the King....

Casting a Spotlight on Human Sex Problems — For THINKING Adults
Some readers of the REVIEW, in the formation of a complete edition devoted solely to a discussion of "Homosexuality: Disease or Way of Life?" by Edmund Bergler, M.D. (New York: Harper & Row, 1956; 302 p. $5) were not a little displeased.

"Why waste the space on such material," some asked.

"I hope the Bergler issue doesn't induce readers to buy the book...I hate to think of anyone making money out of crap like that," wrote another. "What is wrong about letting it be known that we as a special invert group simply don't like the book? This I don't dig," wrote a third. He went on, "There is supposed to be something very bad about what's known as 'special pleading.' I've never been able to understand why. Why must I—or anyone—pretend to impartiality and disinterestedness I certainly do not feel and which is, in fact, a fiction. Where homosexual questions are concerned and I am involved, a frankly interested party, I am partial and partisan to the hilt. I make no bones about it, and make no apologies and see no reason why I should. Should an accused on trial be expected to present pros and cons? Not at all—it is instead proper for him to put his best foot forward, to fight and win his case."

The following pages contain a variety of comment on the controversial book, and perhaps some of it is repetitious and not worth printing. But the comment comes from a wide variety of places—professionally, geographically, intellectually, and from the standpoint of personality orientation.

But from one approach or another, these writers have seen that Doctor Bergler has sifted his samples twice before he selected his candidates for the "cure" he professes to have affected in such a high percentage of cases. We hope our readers remember that in reading the comment, Dr. Bergler did not counsel those persons with homosexual problems who had no basis for believing they wanted to become heterosexual and could.

Credit is hereby given the NEW LEADER, weekly publication of The American Labor Conference on International Affairs, Inc., New York, for a review, letters and comment which it published and which have been reproduced in this issue.
GILBERT CANT, associate editor of TIME, reviewed the Bergler book in the January 7 Issue of THE NEW LEADER. He joined the successful New York psychiatrist in pointing at "Cory and his ilk—who are now coming out of the woodwork with increasing numbers...to deceive us and seduce more of the innocent..."

Homosexuality: Disease or Way of Life?
By Edmund Bergler.
Bilhongra ang. 302 pp. $5.00.

The Malady of Sexual Inversion

Reviewed by Gilbert Cant

BEETHOVEN had syphilis. Robert Louis Stevenson had tuberculosis. Dozens of other great figures in the pageant of arts and letters have suffered from chronic and sometimes vile diseases. Yet none of them, so far as I can recall, has ever rated his disease as a badge of pride, or sought deliberately to spread it among those who, happily, were uninfected. (Byron once expressed a yearning for TB, but that was in one of his less responsible, more Byronic moments.)

The question before us in this book is twofold: Is homosexuality a disease, and is it permissible to try to spread it? To the first, Edmund Bergler, a Manhattan psychoanalyst, answers an unequivocal yes; to the second, an equally unequivocal no.

It is well to recognize at once that Dr. Bergler is far from being either an unimpassioned or impartial witness. We are entitled to take cognizance of the fact that, while basking in the limelight from his Broadway analysands, Dr. Bergler still feels such great need for the hotter Klieg lights of personal publicity that he is forever writing books on whatever is uppermost in the layman's mind —frigidity, marriage and divorce, Kinsey, the middle-aged man and his past-bloom mistress. Having read Freud and some of the post-Freudians who have dared to analyze Freud himself, we are entitled to wonder what intimate psychodynamic need Bergler satisfies by his all-out attack on homosexuality. But when we have examined the man and questioned his motives, we are left with a discomfiting body of facts, which remains valid even if we were to put Bergler's opinions aside—and I don't think they should be put aside.

I remember clearly my own shocked surprise, in the days shortly after high school, on learning that some of my best "male" friends were practicing homosexuals. Equally fresh in memory is the glow of righteousness that I felt on deciding that this was a permissible and tolerable deviation since these people kept their private affairs private and asked only to be left alone on a "live and let live" basis. They did not try to make converts. I remember just as clearly my surprise (as an immigrant) to discover that this tolerance was unfashionable in the United States: The American Legion mentalité prevailed: it branded all deviates as perverts and suggested that flogging at the tail of a cart was too good for them—they should be machine-gunned and buried in quicklime. Since World War II, there has been a marked increase in overt homosexuality, and homosexuals are openly seeking to make converts to their abnormal pattern of life.

Is Bergler, in condemning this most recent trend, turning the clock back? I do not think so. He believes, as do virtually all authorities on the subject (whether sociologists, anthropologists, biologists, psychologists or psychiatrists), that homosexuality is not an hereditary trait and that nobody can be born with it. It is, therefore, not a natural way of life, but a deviation which develops in the branch as the result of some twisting of the twig in childhood. He has no hesitation in branding homosexuality as a perversion—though he must know that his use of that word will lose him the agreement of many supposedly open-minded readers. There are, he says flatly, "no healthy homosexuals."

Along the line, Bergler has to make a distinction between the homosexual whose disease has determined his "life style" and the ignorant, heterosexually frustrated adolescent who stumbles into homosexuality for a single "outlet," in Kinsey's laboratory-refrigerator term. This leads Bergler into a violent attack on Kinsey for having, he alleges, encouraged homosexuality—and perhaps pushed many borderline cases across the divide—by demonstrating the statistical normality of an occasional homosexual episode.

Here I think Bergler's hostility (of which he has a surprising amount for a thoroughly analyzed analyst) is pushing him so far so fast that he ignores his own best evidence. The seeds of homosexuality are usually sown, as he has shown, in infancy. The shoots are well sprouted by adolescence. The number of men in Kinsey's locked files who had one or two homosexual experiences but who are now happily ensconced in the bosom of heterosexuality must vastly outnumber those who have slid all the way into lifelong deviation—probably in exactly the same proportion as heterosexuals outnumber homosexuals in the whole population.
which completely destroys Bergler's argument. Those who blame Kinsey for their deviation are rationalizing, as Bergler should know. He should also know the great (if not absolute) truth in the late Jimmy Walker's saying that nobody was ever corrupted merely by reading a book.

Much of this argument would seem academic were it not for the fact that Bergler gives his own prescription for treatment, admitted homosexuals have, in recent years, launched a drive not only to agree with some of its components, but to accept as the equals of noBal men, but honored as a special breed. Angered by the tactics of McCarthy during his State Department witch hunt, many of us must have moral corners right and left. The felt unwonted sympathy for the worst offender in this obscene persecution—sexual. But it is on a ganda drive is a confused Madison pervert that he thrives, as Bergler Avenue pervert who hides behind his makes clear. We need join in no wife's skirts and the pseudonym Don witch hunts. But neither should we ald Webster Cory. Intellectually gifted, the practitioners and advocates of ed, he has written whole books which a deviation (or perversion, as you could be far more seductive of the will) deceive us and gain license to near-innocent than any mere Kinsey seduce more of the innocent. For all statistics. It is against Cory and his its excesses, this book is a timely ilk—who are now coming out of the reminder of that worthwhile truth.

READERS REACTED...

CANT'S REVIEW undoubtedly resulted in a flood of righteously indignant letters from offended homosexuals, as well as letters of praise from the anti-sexualists. THE NEW LEADER published some of them. One of those published, as stated, came from the New York office of the Mattachine Society...

HOMOSEXUALITY

As a regular reader of THE NEW LEADER, I have more than once written to praise articles that have appeared in your pages. I therefore request your indulgence in replying to a rather muddled piece that appeared in THE NEW LEADER of January 7. I am referring to Gilbert Cant's review of Dr. Edmund Bergler's Homosexuality: Disease or Way of Life?

Mr. Cant confesses to a lesser prejudice than that displayed by Dr. Bergler, but how much less is a moot point. His hostility is directed in particular against those homosexuals who have tried to present a public case for acceptance precisely because a majority of people do not yet share the "live and let live" point of view that Mr. Cant claims as his own. He accuses such people of "openly seeking to make converts" and "to cut moral corners right and left" because of an imagined superiority to the heterosexual.

First of all, having grown up a homosexual in a predominantly hostile world, I and many others of my "ilk" have found it hard enough to be what we are without trying to induce any heterosexual to shoulder the same outcast's burden. This part of our personality, though probably not inborn, is as basic a part of us as other people's heterosexual—for good or bad. We cannot "convert" a heterosexual, nor do we want to any more than the NAACP would want to make a Negro of a white man.

Secondly, what we have of late been trying to tell the more open-minded members of the majority is that sociologically, educationally, biologically—in fact, in every way possible—we are neither their inferiors nor their superiors. We harbor both saint and lunatic, intellectual and manual laborer, libertine and puritan in our number, in perhaps the same proportion as heterosexuals do. We ask no undeserved honor or privilege—only the right, openly and within the bounds of good taste and public morals, to the same "live and let live" that Mr. Cant so admirably espouses. If this is "coming out of the woodwork with increasing insolence and in increasing numbers," then so be it. If some of us have chosen the present time to speak out for the equality before the law that many other countries—but, alas, not yet our own—have acknowledged, or for an understanding of our position by our otherwise enlightened fellow citizens, I can only add that it was about time.

Although unfair to Mr. Cant, it is doubly unfair to this writer that this reply must remain unsigned. The present circumstances make it impossible for most of us in the minority to indulge in the bravado of a signature. For this alone, I request Mr. Cant's and the editors' forgiveness. New York City

A FRIEND

Gilbert Cant's review says: "The American Legion mentality prevailed; it branded all deviates as perverts and suggested that flogging at the tail of a cart was too good for them—they should be machine-gunned and buried in quicklime."

The verb "pervert" is defined in Merriam's Webster, 2nd Edition unabridged, as "to cause deviation from the right, true or regular course." The "regular course" in this country is not homosexuality. Hence, deviation is perversion.

Where and when did The American Legion advocate "machine-gunning" homosexuals and "burying them in quicklime"? You have often attacked McCarthyism and "guilt by association." Mr. Cant refers to "the tactics of McCarthy during the State Department witch hunt." Isn't Mr. Cant using those same tactics? Isn't he finding all members of the Legion guilty by association? He says, "We need join in no witch hunt." Isn't he engaged in a witch hunt against the American Legion?

If it makes anyone happier to call a sexual pervert a deviate, that's his semantic right, but that doesn't justify Mr. Cant in deviating from the truth by attributing to the Legion a position it never took and by deriding the mentality of 2.5 million members of that organization. The American Legion has made mistakes, but so have the Republican party, the Democratic party, Governor Stevenson, Senator Morse and most humanists. McCarthyism as applied to the American Legion (or should I say McCantism?) is no different from Mc-

DEAR EDITOR
Gilbert Cant's review of Dr. Edmund Bergler's *Homosexuality: Disease or Way of Life?* in the January 7 issue of *The New Leader* has been brought to the attention of several members of the Mattachine Society, and we feel that some of the points made there should be discussed further.

To begin with, I object to his placing the word "male" in quotation marks when referring to homosexuals. Until a thorough scientific study is made, it would be best not to perpetuate by implication what may very well be a myth: that homosexuals lack the attributes of virility. I personally have never been able to find any significant correlation, among my friends on both sides of the fence, between their sexual preferences and their other personality traits, such as aggressiveness. Of course, "maleness" might be defined exclusively in terms of sexual preference, but this would lead to rather ludicrous conclusions in many, many instances—Chopin and Alexander the Great, to take just two obvious historical examples.

Far more important than the above is Cant's astonishing statement that "homosexuals are openly seeking to make converts to their abnormal pattern of life." This is indeed news to all of us in the Mattachine Society, an organization that does its best to keep up with all matters pertaining to homosexuality and homosexuals, whether the Society approves of them—or not. I myself—in my own dealings with several hundred homosexuals as well as with organizations like the Mattachine, ONE, the International Committee for Sexual Equality, Arcadie, etc.—have never seen an instance of proselytizing, or even heard of it. I will not deny that some crackpot homosexual might try such a ridiculous and obviously useless sort of thing, but I assume that Cant was not referring to crackpots. If he does know of such a case, we would appreciate hearing further details.

One who is not, and never was, engaged in winning converts for the "homosexual way of life," not even from among the "borderline" cases, is my very good friend Donald Webster Cory. I do not know just what Cant means when he writes of Cory's hiding "behind his wife's skirt," unless it is just a gratuitous insult. Also, Cory is not "Madison Avenue," either geographically or as the term is currently used. Nor has he written "whole books" on the subject of homosexuality—only one, *The Homosexual in America.* This thoughtful, unsensational work has been given the highest praise by homo- and heterosexuals alike, and remains the only book where one can learn precisely what it means to be homosexual.

To speak of this as a "seductive" opus in an "obscene propaganda drive" is almost comical. The name Donald Webster Cory also appears on two other works: 21 Variations and Homosexuality: A Cross-Cultural Approach. These, however, are anthologies of short stories and non-fiction articles, respectively, in which Mr. Cory's contribution was only editorial.

Some homosexuals—like some heterosexuals—do believe that they are "the repository of most of the world's artistic talent," but this ridiculous and patentely false idea is not shared by any reasonably well-educated, thinking homosexual I have ever known. Specifically, it is not held by Cory. Cant may have been misled because homosexuals often do speak of those who, from the days of ancient Greece to 1957, have contributed so much to our civilization, either to point out that homosexuality need not be a bar to achievement or just to show the influence of a person's sexuality upon his work.

As far as the genesis of homosexuality is concerned, it is probably true that no one is born a homosexual. As a matter of fact, many psychologists are of the opinion that no one is born a heterosexual either, but that individuals are originally endowed only with what we might call "blind" sexuality and later events, which apparently take place largely during very early childhood, determine the eventual direction of the sexual impulse. Regardless of genesis, however, Cant was on shaky semantic ground when he referred to homosexuality as "not natural." This is a meaningless term, regardless of where it is applied: Anything that happens is natural, for it is in the nature of things for it to happen.

As for Stanley M. Arndt's defense of the American Legion, which also appeared in the January 28 issue, I am concerned not with a specific organization but with an attitude of mind. All too often the leadership of the Legion and of its individual posts has gone on record in opposition to the rights of unpopular minorities. Any organization must accept the consequences of its acts, and suffer (or enjoy) the reputation that it gets as a result of them.

**THE OMITTED FINAL PARAGRAPH**

"Although he does not state it in so many words, it appears that Mr. Cant agrees with Bergler's dictum that there are no healthy homosexuals. Of course, if one defines homosexuality as a disease, then the statement follows logically. However, this is hardly the sort of approach we have come to expect from those who claim to be in the service of science. Perhaps Bergler does not know it, but there are countless homosexuals who DO lead lives that are happy, stable, productive, rich in achievement, devoid of obsessive and paralyzing conflicts. Should he, or any other worker be interested in conducting a serious scientific study, the Mattachine Society will be happy to cooperate as it has done in the past, and supply subjects more characteristic of the average homosexual than the tiny minority of grossly maladjusted and seriously disturbed individuals psychiatrists know..."
This book is both educational and interesting, if only for discovering some of the diverse views apparently held by Dr. Bergler. A brief commentary can hardly constitute an analytical review. Dr. Bergler's thesis, at least inferentially, seems to imply that homosexuality is indeed a disease and that treatment will invariably be successful if there is a sincere desire for a cure. I do not believe that experience bears this out. The law describes the practising homosexual as a felon. Should Dr. Bergler's assumptions become universal all practising homosexuals would also be classified as willfully diseased. This adds insult to injury. The categories of serious mental illness may be filled by heterosexuals as well as homosexuals. The foregoing is my primary criticism of Dr. Bergler's work.

I am reminded that psychoanalysis too often conceals the nature of social relations behind terms for sexual relations. It is also probably true that psychoanalysis, unless properly discounted, can lead us astray even further by concealing the nature of exclusive social relations behind inclusive terms for sexual relations.

There is much evidence to support the fact that one may be made neurotic by the social discriminations of the hierarchy of class. Certainly the homosexual element of the U.S. population confronts a prejudice virtually amounting to "hierarchic psychosis." This probably prevails in all nations, but is especially sinister in those which are largely ruled by the dead hand of institutions developed from past situations but unsuited to the present. If, as Dr. Bergler seems to suggest, homosexuality is a "social disease," no doubt "psychogenic illness" is the usual symptom. Perhaps it is no accident that psychoanalysis and the Freudian school grew under the shadow of the ailing Hapsburg bureaucracy.

In considering the factor of the emotional problems of the homosexual it may be that abandonment to forms of sexual expression that society deems degrading could be at once a rebellion and a self-accusation, a morbidly tense acceptance of the very judgments by which one refuses to be bound. Could it be that one comes closer to the truth in saying that such abandonment is a grotesque form of social courtship than if one confines his explanation to a purely sexual source? Heterosexuals also indulge in degrading acts. The foregoing is not to discount the many possible benefits of psychoanalysis. In one case known to me a young man was continually beseeching the Godhead, through the intercession of St. Jude, for assistance in accomplishing a homosexual fornication with his employer. Admittedly this man could well use advice, not only from his analyst, but also from his confessor. On the other hand, if homosexuals may actually love we are reminded that "dans le véritable amour c'est l'âme qui enveloppe le corps"—in true love it is the soul that embraces the body.
FROM ONE DEGREE TO ANOTHER

By Robert Phillips, M. D.

The next comment is by a doctor who formerly served in the U. S. Navy. He writes:

In "Homosexuality: Disease or Way of Life," Dr. Bergler's evidence that all homosexuals are neurotic acts as coercive proof for himself since all those who came to him for treatment or who are brought to him for treatment by their shocked relatives or friends are necessarily neurotic or they would not be in the office of a psychiatrist. Likewise all heterosexuals who consult him on a doctor-patient basis are neurotic. He seems to feel that a majority of heterosexuals are not very neurotic—a debatable point.

Since in any society the beliefs and laws are regulated by the overall group to best preserve the integrity of the whole, these guidelines produce at least a relative stability within the majority, and in acting as a form of censure these same rules also create a relatively unstable minority since no system of conduct could possibly apply to all: It is evident that the very creation of this or any system is recognition of differences and alternatives. As heterosexuals comprise a majority, most of the stable members of the society are heterosexuals and it is unfortunate that Dr. Bergler's albeit limited environment has not produced for his study and observation the stable homosexual minority. To find these persons he must lay aside his medical cloak and go out into the world since the highways of stability do not pass through his office.

That a majority of homosexuals are neurotic and psychosomatics is quite satisfactorily explained in his own words, "...the super ego cannot impose punishment for actions approved by the environment", if the converse is accepted that the super ego will impose punishment for actions not approved by the environment.

The dismissal of Dr. Alfred Kinsey as a "medical layman" does injustice to the statistical study. Kinsey's remarks concerning them may well represent his own opinions, but the statistics, of whatever value they may be, are not entirely his own. Calling attention to the fact that Dr. Kinsey does not have a medical degree is an attempt to discredit the man and thereby his reasoning—a common fallacy of reasoning. The obtaining of a medical degree and adding thereto a specialized study within the medical field does not confer a super degree of intelligence or imply objectivity of the reasoning mind. Dr. Kinsey could just as easily have pointed out the degrees which Dr. Bergler does not possess and his resultant limitations although such restrictions of knowledge are a result of one's lack of study and not academic degrees. This fact is of no value to the author as he dismisses his colleagues who differ from his opinions simply as misguided and clinging to outmoded concepts or as members of a dead or dying generation. He presents his own ego ideal in the blatantly false statement, "There is unanimity among psychiatrists that homosexuality is a disease." Is this a sign of progress? Do psychiatrists believe there is at least something about which they have unanimity of opinion?

In the book the author demonstrates a profound knowledge of the development of human personality and its problems, in a Freudian sort of way, in the company with his system of ideas about homosexuality. Is it possible that instead of his unconscious ideas going on where his logic ends that these unconscious ideas are used as a starting point or assist for the logical system? The book is recommended reading for any neurotic person of whatever
A piece of copy which concluded the article of Dr. Phillips (page 11) intended to appear at the top of page 12, got lost at the photographers. Dr. Phillips' article concluded with:

...of whatever sexual leaning if they plan to become a patient of Dr. Bergler. To all other persons having neurotic tendencies, I suggest that you leave the volume unpurchased, to be returned to the publisher, rather than place yourselves in the position of being deceived by the Author's ideas and thereby having an increase in your own feelings of guilt in an already too guilt-ridden world.

WERE YOU MISSED IN APRIL? After mailing our April issue, we discovered that we possibly missed some subscribers in the addressing of envelopes, but we cannot determine WHO. If your April issue did not arrive, notify us and we will mail one immediately.

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That a majority of homosexuals are neurotic and psychic masochists is quite satisfactorily explained in his own words, "...the superego cannot impose punishment for actions approved by the environment," if the converse is accepted that the superego will impose punishment for actions not approved by the environment.

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IF THE CAT CAN LOOK AT THE KING...
By Luther Allen

HOOMOSXUALITY. DISEASE OR WAY OF LIFE? Why must it be either the one extreme or the other? A homosexual may be a business man, a Presbyterian, a Republican, a music lover, a bridge player, a tennis enthusiast, a war veteran (with honorable service, too), and many other things besides being a homosexual. Many are husbands, fathers, and pillars of their communities. Homosexuality is only one element in a total way of life. Sex is a way of life for very few people in this world—that goes for homosexuals as well as heterosexuals. Many scientific studies of homosexuality stress that the homosexual is indistinguishable from other men and women in the great majority of cases. He does not live much differently from his fellows, he does not exhibit any marked eccentricities. Although, if this was his life he is a deviant, he may be and often is an ultra-conformist in all other respects. Nobody would deny that homosexuals are more neurotic than heterosexuals, by and large. Many homosexuals are seriously sick, it’s true. But I simply do not believe that homosexuality is the dread disease Dr. Bergler insists that it invariably is. But Dr. Bergler sees everything in extremes, thinks in black-and-white terms. This certainly makes his book more sensational and dramatic, but I suspect it also distorts considerably.

Dr. Bergler rejects the popular definition of the homosexual as "a person who derives his sexual excitement and satisfaction from a person of his own sex". He insists upon a definition which will contain a built-in judgement. His first objection to the usual definition is that "It accepts the parity between homosexuals and heterosexuals as a matter of fact, and hence becomes a useful argument in the homosexuals' advocacy of their perversion." Not true! Such a definition does not make any comparison at all. It simply states the one thing which makes a homosexual a homosexual. It isn’t the function of definitions to make comparisons and pass judgments. Even in defining a crime such as murder we do not require that the definition contain a judgement or evaluation. I think Dr. Bergler wants to play with a stacked deck.

Dr. Bergler's second and third objections to the popular definition concern the personality and character defects of homosexuals. He wants to include a dissertation on those defects within the definition. Towards the end of the book he shows us that in at least one case he was able to bring about characterological improvements in a patient without eradicating her homosexuality. One suspects that these character defects are not related to the homosexuality like one Siamese twin to the other. Dr. Bergler lists ten factors which are "specifically and exclusively characteristic of homosexuals", "some of which have surface reverberations". Most of the factors Dr. Bergler lists are not exclusive with homosexuals at all, but are characteristic of social rejections in general. Members of all persecuted minorities tend to become "injustice collectors", tend to retreat into a defensive pretense of superiority as over-compensation for society's intolerance upon their inferiority, experience depression and harbor maladjustments which tend to be unreliable. People who took German Jewish refugees into their homes in the years prior to World War II often found these same traits in their unhappy guests developed to an almost pathological degree. Many Negroes in the United States display the same set of characteristics. I do not believe that such factors are intrinsic to homosxuality and belong in any definition of it.

Dr. Bergler claims that "Without exception, deep inner guilt arising from the perversion is present in homosexuals." Small wonder! From his earliest years the homosexual is conditioned to regard persons like himself as either comic or monstrous. He soon learns that he must live in a world in which the law regards him as a criminal and the church as a sinner. Society has its Trojan horse within the minds of most homosexuals. One part of him is identified with his environment and shares its reprobation, turning against the homosexual part of himself and the homosexuality rhiths of depth psychology to understand the homosexual's sense of guilt. To return to the question of definition, a sense of guilt may impel a man to murder and it may also be a consequence of the act, but we do not include guilt in a definition of "murderer". Besides, we would have to be able to prove conclusively that a sense of guilt was intrinsic to homosexuality and not an introjection of society's animus before we could even consider including that factor in our definition of "homosexual".

Dr. Bergler writes, "I can say with some justification that I have no bias against homosexuals...Still, though I have no bias, if I were asked what kind of a person the homosexual is, I would say: 'Homosexuals are essentially disagreeable people, regardless of their pleasant or unpleasant outward manner." The entire book displays so obvious an animus against the homosexual that one is led to suspect that Dr. Bergler brings out the worst in any homosexual who comes to him for treatment. It is no wonder that he is convinced that all homosexuals are masochists. What other kind would go to a man as aggressively anti-homosexual as he? Is it remarkable that homosexuals, in analysis with such a person, should become very "disagreeable" in sheer self-defence? Is it pathological for a man to defend himself if under attack? Dr. Bergler reproaches the homosexual because he lacks a normal live-and-let-live attitude. Does he exemplify this attitude? Does society, where the homosexual is concerned? One thing sure, Dr. Bergler's book is quite as emotional as Donald Webster Cory's defence of homosexuality.

A book of this sort doesn't enhance the reputation of psychoanalysis. If the cat can look at the king, then certainly the "cutes" can look at the psychoanalyst. Dr. Bergler claims many cures, and by cure he means nothing less than the renunciation of homosexuality and the achievement of satisfactory heterosexual marriage. But has anyone verified these claims? Does anyone, ever, verify the claims of psychoanalysts? In the case of some scientific discovery like the Salk vaccine, it is subjected to the most careful and exact tests all along the way of its development and the final product is given the most rigorous and objective tests of all. Where psychoanalysis is concerned, there are no tests, no proofs.
It seems to me that psychoanalytic doctrine has developed rather like the way theology developed in the Middle Ages. Each new theory purports to give a plausible and efficacious explanation of that which was formerly inexplicable, an explanation, moreover, which tends to add to the self-consistency of the whole. Of course, doctrinal disputes are rife among the theologians as was the case among the theologians of long ago. Above all, when one asks for proofs the psychologistic theologian will give the mystic an answer: "You cannot judge us until you have experienced analysis and after that you will not need to." A few of the more candid analysts have admitted that their profession is not a science but rather an art. This, of course, implies that the analyst is an artist and that his patients are the raw material with which he creates. But there is a great difference between the bona fide artist who uses in his work only inert, insensate paint, clay, canvas, plasters, and the psychoanalyst who works his creative will upon sentient human beings like himself. As Kant put it, we are morally obliged to treat each human being as an end in himself and never as a means. To these objections the analyst will reply with a shrug and a comment on the objector’s defensive narcissism. But why should any individual relinquish his own narcissism to become the malleable creature of a psychoanalyst’s narcissism? To this the analyst will answer promptly, "Because you are unhappy, you suffer, you are sick." And perhaps he will continue, along Berglerian lines, "You see, you believe that your unhappiness is caused by others, you believe that the world is against you, 'everybody is out of step but Johnny'. In reality you create your own suffering, you know. In fact, you enjoy suffering. You delight in getting yourself ostracized because of your homosexuality; you revel in getting beaten up, rolled, exploited, blackmailed, tossed into jail. You are a masochist, you know. It is your own fault that your family kicked you out when they discovered you were homosexual. It is your own fault that you got fired from that good job when the boss received an anonymous letter revealing your homosexuality. It is your own fault that the young man you loved and did everything you could for robed you blind and later tried to blackmail you. It is your own fault that a good-looking detective picked you up, led you on, and then arrested you when you responded to his advances. You have an irrational grudge against your family, your boss, your lover, the detective who arrested you, but down deep, you know, you loved every minute of it. You wanted everything to happen just the way it did, you made it happen that way. That’s more, if I came to me as a patient I would make use of this very need to take a beating to make you well. I’d clobber you and clobber you with the sure knowledge that you would always come back for more until at last you gave up homosexuality, got married and settled down. And it would not hurt me more than it did you, either. Because, after all, let’s face it, you’re a louse." The prospective patient might answer, "Well, I don’t know... Suppose I’m a Masochist like you say: Isn’t it possible that my masochism just feeds your sadism?" At this the analyst puffs like a pouter pigeon, "Preposterous! That is paranoid suspiciousness. I am entirely objective! Thoroughly unbiased! What you fail to realize is that homosexuals are utterly impossible people in every respect. The analyst must make them over completely. The homosexuality started in the years of earliest infancy, when the child was still a nursing, as a matter of fact. One must remake the individual from the very beginning, you see. Read my book. You will see that there is absolutely no good in the homosexual at all. Not one of my patients possessed a single redeeming trait until I took him in hand, you’ll notice." The interrogator ponders, shakes his head and signs: "To remake a human being practically from scratch and in entirety... don’t you sometimes feel that maybe you are competing with God?"

After rereading Dr. Bergler’s book and reviewing these pages, I confess I find it all very confusing. I believe that most of my objections to the book are well-founded. Even my objections to psychoanalysis are, I think, well-founded. At the same time I am certainly not anti-analytic to the extent that my criticisms might indicate. Nor do I believe that the theory of psychic masochism is poppycock. There is no doubt in my mind about the reality and the importance of masochism as a human wrecker. Its understanding certainly provides a powerful therapeutic tool, or lever. But it seems to me that Dr. Bergler overworks this masochism thing. Every trait in his patients which isn’t "correct" Dr. Bergler would attribute to masochistic provocativeness, I suspect. Now it might be said that a Jew who remains a Jew in an anti-Semitic environment is simply a masochist. By refusing to change, to yield to social prejudices and pressures, he "invites" trouble for himself. The psychoanalyst could very easily draw the conclusion that the Jew’s resistance to change was due to the fact that he wanted to get hurt, needed to be persecuted, enjoyed it. In some cases such an interpretation might very well be true. Yet in many cases, the great majority, the Jew who remains a Jew in an anti-Semitic environment is exhibiting integrity. Is the homosexual who refuses to be brainwashed into conformity a masochist, or is he exhibiting integrity? In any case, the man who yields to coercion, whether physical or psychic, cannot retain much self-respect. And as long as our society maintains a coercive attitude towards homosexuals I doubt that there will be many voluntary changes.

Masochism... Dr. Bergler’s book creates still another perplexity in my mind... the homosexual refuses Dr. Bergler’s curative therapy this refusal is an indication of his masochism. Homosexuality can bring nothing but unhappiness and humiliation, the homosexual who refuses to change is opting for suffering, this can only be because he likes to suffer. On the other hand, Dr. Bergler states candidly that he utilizes the patient’s masochism in order to make him give up his homosexuality... it would seem that the homosexual is a masochist if he refuses curative therapy and a masochist if he goes through with it. "You’re damned if you do and damned if you don’t." But some people really do find themselves in homosexuality.

Dr. Bergler, as I’ve noted, refers to a live-and-let-live attitude as normal. Yet he tells us also that his cured homosexuals detest other homosexuals even more violently than he himself does. What can we think but that Dr. Bergler takes the infantile, neurotic sense of guilt which plagues his patients and makes it stick, makes his patients submit their own most deeply irrational self-condemnation? What sort of finished, cured product does Dr. Bergler aim to turn out? He gives us a strong indication in a back-handed sort of way in the following sentence: "That is one of the reasons why you seldom find a Junker in the woodpile." Such a phrase may be in popular use in Middle Europe but one doesn’t hear it in the United States. I suspect that there is a Junker in the woodpile.

Psychoanalysis requires a minimum of three visits a week for at least a year, maybe two years. Twenty dollars a visit would be a moderate fee these days. At that rate an analysis would cost at least three thousand dollars, maybe six thousand or more. I do not begrudge...
According to Dr. Bergler all homosexuality is strictly from hunger. As I have said, I believe his theory is essentially a sound one but I doubt that it is the sole explanation. As I understand it, the substructure of the homosexual's personality is that of the infant utterly dependent upon the mother and who, through some grave mischance, has come to fear and hate her. He is caught between his hunger and his helpless need on the one hand, and his terror and resentment on the other. Underneath everything is the insatiable longing for the breast. Since he is still dependent upon the mother for survival he must in some way dispose of his fear and hatred of her. This he accomplishes by turning these negative feelings against himself, he hates and fears himself—in other words a powerful sense of guilt is born. By this means he is able to maintain a superficially submissive attachment to the mother. Yet, the unresolved hunger, terror and fury continue to dominate his life, subterraneously. In the penis he discovers a substitute for the breast which seems to give promise of rendering him independent of the feared and hated mother. Throughout the rest of his life he seeks the penis as a starving child seeks the breast, but in every relationship he unconsciously repeats some version of the original mother-child dilemma. The quest for the penis is carried on in a tormenting emotional climate, the terror, rage and mistrust of a helpless infant whose mother has starved him, injured him, or neglected him in some way. He also transposes into the homosexual realm the original sense of guilt which came into being as an inner defence against his hostility towards his mother. The neurotic hunger for the penis/breast goes far beyond the individual's, organic or biologic sexual need. In fact it may operate at the expense of the individual's own proper sexuality. Any gratification of the hunger bears no relation to the individual's actual nutritional needs.

The homosexual's deep-seated attitude of indignation against life is the result of an unfortunate experience in infancy. When he protests against injustices—real or imagined—in later life what he is really trying to do is to articulate his grudge against his mother. He seeks out dangerous and humiliating situations in which he can discharge his accumulated tensions of hunger, fear and anger and at the same time receive punishment. Although he may maintain a masochistic attachment to the world, underneath he feels rejected by it, as he felt rejected by his mother, and he rejects, as he rejected his mother.

Now, from the therapist's point of view it may not matter whether the infant his patient once was actually starved, injured, mistreated or neglected by his mother, or whether the baby simply mis-understood his accumulated tensions of hunger, fear and anger and at the same time received punishment. Although he may maintain a masochistic attachment to the world, underneath he feels rejected by it, as he felt rejected by his mother, and he rejects, as he rejected his mother.

Whatever doesn't fit his theory is "pseudo". Very convenient!

Dr. Bergler has developed a certain theory about the genesis of homosexuality. I feel convinced that in its basic outlines his theory is a sound one. But is there any good reason why there may not be several or even numerous causes of homosexuality? As it is, Dr. Bergler wants to deny the very existence of all facts which he cannot square with his theory. He passionately objects to the concept of bisexuality, for instance. "Bisexuality—a state that has no existence beyond the word itself—is an out-and-out fraud, involuntarily maintained by some naive homosexuals, and voluntarily perpetrated by some who are not so naive." This makes Freud, Stekel, Ferenczi, Ernest Jones, Karl Menninger and many others of his colleagues frauds. To say nothing of men like Ford and Beach, of Yale—who are biologists, I believe—and some distinguished anthropologists. Then there is also Dr. Kinsey of course...

It just isn't cricket to create the impression that the concept of bisexuality is the self-service of homosexuals. It is true that the homosexual tends to over-rate the strength of the homosexual component in predominantly heterosexual individuals. The fact that man is bisexual does not imply that his homosexual part is always free enough or powerful enough to lead him into overt homosexual relationships, especially when his heterosexual satisfaction renders homosexual activity superfluous. But I think it is equally true that the heterosexually oriented tend to under-rate the power of the homosexual components. This leads to sometimes comic, sometimes tragic misunderstandings between homosexuals and heterosexuals in their personal relationships. I see no reason to disparage the work which Walt Whitman did in the army hospitals in Washington during the Civil War and I believe that Whitman's insight was essentially true in regard to the emotional responsiveness of the wounded to his love for them. However, it does seem likely that most of the young men who responded so gratefully to Whitman's love when sick and suffering and neglected, would not have done so in normal circumstances. That is to say, Whitman overestimated the power and significance of the homosexually tinged responses; they emerged in highly abnormal circumstances when in the course of normal life they would probably have remained deeply dormant. On the other hand the tendency of the contemporary heterosexual to deny the value of Whitman's ministrations to the neglected casualties of the Civil War seems to me very ugly and mean-spirited. The fact remains that Whitman served the wounded to the best of his ability and resources—nobody else did. Dr. Bergler's sneering disparagement of Whitman's services is the sort of diversion which the heterosexually oriented, when the heterosexuals results in only too often. But my main purpose in this paragraph was to point out that Dr. Bergler wants to deny the very existence of all facts which he cannot square with his theory. He has much to say about "counterfeit sex", "pseudo-homosexuality", "pseudo-aggression", "pseudo-love", etc.
of complicated and subtle ramifications. If my friend had been psychoanalysed I should think it would have been disastrous if the analysis had gotten bogged down in a wrangle as to whether the mother had loved her baby and the baby misunderstood, or had not loved him, as he always believed and felt. The point is that when a man already with the condition of homosexuality battles with resentment towards a mother, long dead, something is drastically wrong, period.

While willingly granting all this, there remains a peculiarity in Dr. Bergler's book I find it difficult to understand: he tends to whitewash his patients' families and to place the entire blame for his condition upon the patient. He says, in effect, "Other children in similar situations managed to discover better solutions. If you didn't, you have only yourself to blame." Again, Dr. Bergler shows no awareness of the degrees of difficulty which life-problems may present to children, due to complicating accidents and contingencies. And it seems fantastic to hold an infant in arms responsible for the course he blindly and gropingly embarked upon, while equally fantastic to absolve parents of responsibility for the neuroticism of their children. Dr. Bergler's attitude seems to give to parents the sort of blanket indulgence and tolerance we normally extend only to very small children and to expect of children a degree of responsibility for the consequences of their acts which we normally reserve for adults. He also shows a sympathetic, tender concern for the sensibilities of parents and other relatives of homosexuals, while it seems to me that the weeping, wailing and gnashing of teeth by families when it is discovered that one of the clan is homosexual is, in itself, a pretty pathological way to react.

To return to my friend who, on his death-bed still bitterly reproached his long-dead mother for not having loved him, he was a reformer and a leftist in social and political matters. It is easy to see the connection between his life of social protest and that basic protest against an unloving mother. All the same, I do not think it is the function of psychotherapy to make such an individual into a conformist. I believe, on the contrary, that it should be the aim of the psychotherapist to bring the patient, to the point where he can make truly independent, rational decisions and judgments, unimpaired upon by the ideology of the therapist, on the one hand, yet free from the old neurotic premises on the other. My friend might have become more conservative as a result of analysis, but rather brought to the point where his past no longer dominates his livelihood and he is free to choose whether or not he will continue life as a homosexual or turn to heterosexuality.

Dr. Bergler explains to us that the homosexual, when an infant, fears, hates and rejects his mother, while remaining dependent upon her. These negative emotions he then turns back upon himself and experiences them as guilt. Now, Dr. Bergler also tells us that the analyst utilised this guilt, this masochism, in the therapeutic relationship. It is clear to me just how the patient's guilt is used. Does the analyst support and fortify this neurotic guilt, throw the weight of his influence on the side of the guilt, in order to force the patient to give up homosexuality? If this is the case it would seem that "cure" is really a victory for neurosis, masochism triumphs over erotism. Then after years of severe discipline and intense striving the patient emerges as a sexually "correct person". One cannot help wondering whether there is any spontaneity or poetry left in sexual love. When the average boy goes for the average girl he is simply "doing what comes naturally"; his love has a quality of inevitability; his entire history has prepared him for the love of woman, his entire nature gives assent to it. How different a situation for the converted and remodelled homosexual! He is a man uprooted, estranged from his own past, bitterly hating his own parents and former self. Perhaps there is a certain quality of fanaticism in his heterosexuality, like the fanaticism of converts to a religion or to some political creed. One wonders whether this newly attained heterosexuality is a genuine liberation of a formerly repressed part of the patient's self or rather the result of intensive indoctrination over a long period. Dr. Bergler's avowed utilisation of the character defects which are responsible for that guilt, but without the necessity of giving up homosexuality and becoming heterosexual. I should think that both patient and therapist were morally obliged to work for the elimination of those defects which result in genuinely destructive behavior. If a patient wants to change, wants to become heterosexual, that is one thing—he ought to have all the help possible in effecting the change, but if the patient does not want to change I do not think that his neurotic dependency upon the analyst plus his masochism ought to be exploited as tools to force him to change. It seems to me that the latter comes very close to coercion, to "brain-washing."

Dr. Bergler believes that homosexuality is not genuinely erotic at all, that it is a thoroughly masochistic pleasure, thoroughly neurotic. But if human nature is, in truth, bisexual then we must acknowledge that there is a basic and genuine element of erotism in homosexuality. If this is the case, homosexual interests may not necessarily disappear when the infantile neurosis is worked through and dissolved. If this is the case, individuals may turn to homosexuality for a diversity of reasons, not only those covered by the theory of preoedipal orality. If this is the case, homosexuality may vary from the pathological to the mildly abnormal. Dr. Bergler seems to believe, that the test of whether or not a theory of homosexuality is correct depends upon whether or not the theory results in cures. If bisexuality is a fact, then it is conceivable that in certain cases homosexuality may be so genuinely rewarding that the initial causes might be quite correctly determined yet remain therapeutically ineffective, if the therapeutic aim is "cure" in Dr. Bergler's sense.

Actually, in the course of these notes, I've been dealing in a seemingly contradictory way, with three quite different kinds of guilt: First, the unconscious, neurotic guilt of the preoedipal stage; second, the social guilt arising from transgression of the introjected norms; and third, real guilt, arising from genuinely destructive, harmful behavior. It seems to me that therapy should aim to relieve the individual insofar as possible from guilt arising from the first two sources, while enabling him to become deeply responsible in his attitude towards the third. Whether or not he emerges from therapy a "correct person" is of little importance if he behaves with self-respect and a decent
regard for others. But this decent regard for others does not go so far as to require one to relinquish to others the right to determine whom one shall love and whom one shall not love.

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I find yet another apparent contradiction in these notes. In the early pages I say that the social position of the homosexual is enough in itself to account for most of his personality and character defects, and that those defects which Dr. Bergler lists are not, as he claims, exclusive with homosexuals but are characteristic of all social rejets. I mentioned the appearance of such characteristics in certain Jewish refugees from Naziism, and also in Negroes. Not all persecuted Jews, or all Negroes, exhibit them in the same degree. Some do not exhibit them at all. In perhaps the great majority, those typically "under dog" character traits exist only in mild forms. This means that certain individuals in these groups are more neurotic than others, and that those who are the more neurotic will react to prejudice and persecution in more extreme ways. In a social atmosphere of acceptance and tolerance an individual's neurosis may not be incapacitating and disruptive, but when he must grow up and live in a social world which is prejudiced and intolerant his neurosis is exacerbated, gets out of hand and rampages. It just will not do to overlook the fact that society itself may be pathological in some respects. It seems to me a mistake for the homosexual to put all the responsibility for his predicament upon society, but it is equally mistaken for society to shunt all the responsibility to the homosexual.

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Dr. Bergler claims that characteristically homosexuals in business and the professions give jobs only to their own kind and give promotion preferentially to other homosexuals. This charge is taken straight from the anti-Semites' shop-worn bag of tricks. We all know that there is a tendency for white employers to hire Negroes only for menial positions, for Protestants to discriminate against Catholics and Jews, for Gentiles to discriminate against Protestants and Jews, etc. There may also be a tendency for homosexuals to hire other homosexuals. Where this sort of senseless discrimination exists it is certainly deplorable. But I doubt if it is any more typical of homosexuals than of other groups. And there is certainly a very great number of employers in all groups who hire men on the basis of their individual qualifications and merits.

Perhaps it is true that certain homosexual theatrical producers demand that young actors sleep with them in order to get parts. If this is so it is certainly as disgusting to most homosexuals as it is to Dr. Bergler. But it ought to be remembered that heterosexual producers are said to make the same demands of young actresses.

It seems to me that attacks of this sort are pretty low-level propaganda.

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So far as I know not a word has been written against this book. Dr. Bergler is a sort of McCarthy of the psychoanalytic group and the reactions to his book have been similar to that of many Americans to McCarthyism. "I don't like his methods but I think he's doing some good." And nobody dares to come out in the open and challenge him because nobody wants the reputation of being "soft" on homosexuals.

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I try to put myself in the position of a heterosexual reader. I hear his saying, "Jeess, from the way this guy writes you'd think loving women was a fate worse than death." And perhaps he would continue, "Yes, that's what is really wrong with all these arguments. All Berg-

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What kind of homosexuals go to psychoanalysts? The reader of Dr. Edmund Bergler's controversial book is bound to ask. Like all analysts, Dr. Bergler bases his conclusions concerning the cause and cure of homosexuality on the cases he has encountered. And like most analysts, he has been convinced by his cases that homosexuality is a disease, not merely a "sex sickness" but a sickness of the whole personality.

In evaluating Dr. Bergler's views (or those of any analyst), it is crucial to determine how typical of the mass of homosexuals is the mere handful he (or any analyst) gets to study. The answer suggested by a careful reading of HOMOSEXUALITY: DISEASE OR WAY OF LIFE? is that an analyst is apt to encounter primarily those homosexuals who are in trouble with themselves or with society—those who have an unusual degree of guilt concerning their sex activities and those who are in especially severe conflict with their environment. Is it only accidental that of the approximately 25 cases which Dr. Bergler actually describes in his book, three came to his after being jailed for their homosexual acts, another came after nearly being arrested, four after being blackmailed or threatened with exposure, and still another after being beaten up? Included in the reported cases are such rarities as these: a sadist, a child molester, a virtual transvestite, another fellow who regularly put on make-up in front of his family, one who paid for his analysis by stealing from his employer's cash register (Dr. Bergler discontinued the analysis when he found out), and finally, one who was literally offered a $1 million legacy to "change, marry and produce a child."

Since Dr. Bergler is vehemently critical of Kinsey's "statistical fairy tales" produced by the "neurotic volunteers" Kinsey mistook for a cross-section, it is indeed remarkable that Dr. Bergler fails to recognize the utterly unrepresentative character of his own collection of cases. Yet out of such raw materials he builds his book; from the reported cases and others presumably atypical, he derives his understanding of what kind of people homosexuals are, what makes them homosexuals, and what the chances are for curing them.

On the basis of his cases Dr. Bergler observes that homosexuals are...
"essentially disagreeable people." From these few cases he generalizes that all homosexuals are unreliable, ungrateful, malicious, cynical, supercilious, unstable, unable to stick to a job, without exception they are "actual or potential" parasites and trouble-makers; universally they refuse to accept moral standards even in non-sexual spheres; they are to be found in unusually large numbers among swindlers, pathological liars, forgers, lawbreakers of all sorts, drug peddlers, gamblers, spies, pimps, and brothel owners.

One may observe that Dr. Bergler seems to have been almost unbelievably unlucky in the homosexuals he has known. One may also observe that there are sufficient sick and psychopathic homosexuals to make superficially plausible the argument that all homosexuals are sick and psychopathic.

But how can Dr. Bergler know? Certainly, if he is right that a distorted personality is the universal and inevitable concomitant of the disease of homosexuality, he is only doing his duty when he proposes that books and plays reflecting "the homosexual's outlook on life" be labeled as subversive of established values in somewhat the same manner as some libraries label communist literature.

The part that a hostile society may have played in distorting the personalities of many homosexuals is almost ignored by Dr. Bergler. This disregard for the reality of the conditions under which homosexuals are compelled to live may have led him to an even more fundamental error.

He observes from his cases that homosexuals are constantly getting into trouble—indeed, most of his patients come to him for that very reason. From this he deduces that all homosexuals are constantly getting into trouble. For example, when a homosexual goes cruising, he runs the risk of being arrested, blackmailed or beaten up. Therefore, homosexuals want to be hurt, humiliated, defeated and destroyed; they are all psychic masochists.

Other analysts, Reik for example, have noted the presence of masochistic qualities in many homosexuals. But Dr. Bergler is unique as far as I am aware in seeing in psychic masochism the primary cause of homosexuality—or to put it the way he would prefer: homosexual behavior is nothing more than a particular defense which some psychic masochists adopt. One is almost tempted to say that Dr. Bergler arrives at this view because he wants to do so, because it fits homosexuality into his general theory of neurosis. That theory contends that psychic masochism is the basic neurosis, that all neurotics are first of all psychic masochists, that the different forms of neurosis are merely elaborations of the fundamental masochism. In his earlier book, THE BASIC NEUROSIS (Brine & Stratton, New York, 1919), he has described 27 such elaborations including homosexuality.

What then is the process by which a homosexual is made? For the future homosexual as for every child the all-important relationship which shapes his life is the first one: the relationship between the baby and his mother. The baby's illusion of omnipotence is in constant conflict with infantile reality—his complete dependence on his mother. Moreover, she is constantly disappointing him; for example, his bottle may arrive a minute or two after he starts yelling for it. He even fears his mother may be trying to starve him. This fear of starvation is possibly the most important of a "septet of baby fears" (Dr. Bergler loves septets and septets and is especially enamored of triads). The combination of fury and fear makes life unbearable for the infant. The baby's solution is to learn to like displeasure, to find pleasure in displeasure.

All children have a dose of this psychic masochism; the neurotic has an overdose. The baby who becomes a neurotic was hurt more in his conflict with infantile reality; he does not get over his wounds. He goes through life replaying the old scenes of infancy, unconsciously provoking
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Retake of Preceding Frame
situations in which he can get pleasure in displeasure. But while this is the neurotic’s real aim, another part of his unconscious is forbidding this infantile indulgence. So the neurotic creates various defense mechanisms or alibis which will permit him to enjoy the forbidden fruit of masochistic enjoyment and at the same time give him the illusion that he is not doing so. One of these alibi defences is homosexuality.

Why do some masochists adopt the homosexual defense instead of others? Presumably because their mothers have disappointed them more and frightened them more. "The homosexual," says Dr. Bergler, "takes flight to man as an antidote for the woman he fears; the antidote is only secondarily elevated to the status of an attraction".

All this is decided in the first 16 months of life. Most psychoanalytic theories about homosexuality put the determinative period later; in the years from 2½ to 5 when the child is going through the Oedipus Complex. By putting the causative factors back in the pre-Oedipal period, Dr. Bergler absolves the father of all responsibility for his son’s homosexuality; the father’s strength or weakness, his presence or absence, can play no part in the period when the child is aware only of his mother. Oddly enough, Dr. Bergler also absolves the mother of any responsibility; both parents are “innocent victims” if their sons become homosexuals.

What then determines why one boy should get an overdose of masochism and another should develop normally? Or why one baby should be so afraid of his mother that he becomes homosexual and another should adopt some other neurotic defense? Are there inherited or constitutional differences? Some physical factor? Chemistry? Dr. Bergler does not say. Nor does he tell us why, in a two-sided relationship, only the child should be blamed for failure. If the future homosexual’s infantile fear, centered on his mother, was greater than the fear other babies had, could it not be that the mother of the future homosexual was somehow different in her behavior toward her son? And if, as Dr. Bergler believes, homosexuality has increased, is it more reasonable to suppose that a generation of mothers is behaving differently—in such a way as to produce homosexual sons—than that infants are suddenly being born less able to cope with the unavoidable strains of infancy?

A fair evaluation of Dr. Bergler’s belief in the masochistic foundation of homosexuality is not easy to make. No doubt homosexuals living in a heterosexual and indeed anti-sexual society frequently find themselves (Dr. Bergler would say “put themselves”) in situations in which they stand a chance to be hurt. Dr. Bergler contends that even if all the external disadvantages, discriminations and dangers of being homosexual were miraculously removed, homosexuals would still be miserable (he would say “seek misery”). This he cannot know. For neither Dr. Bergler nor any of his colleagues has ever treated the product of a sexually free society in which no penalties and no risks were attached to homosexuality.

Elsewhere Dr. Bergler has written, “homosexuality is not a drive but a defense mechanism” (in NEUROTIC COUNTERFIT-SEX, Grune & Stratton, New York, 1951, page 199). The assumption that homosexuality is not a true sex drive at all but a form of “counterfit-sex” underlies the theory of the masochistic source of homosexuality. The homosexual is obviously seeking something; if it isn’t sex, it is very likely masochistic “kicks.” If the opposite assumption is made, that an independent homosexual drive can exist apart from masochistic or other neurotic trends, then Dr. Bergler’s theoretical structure crashes like a house of cards.

The rejection of homosexuality as an independent drive in human beings is of course directly contrary to Freud who assumed the basic bisexuality of all men. To Dr. Bergler bisexuality “has no existence beyond the word itself.” For example, men in prison do not seek homosexual outlets as a natural alternative when women are not available—but because they are
Behind Dr. Bergler's attack on bisexuality apparently lies the fear that this concept of Freud's, as re-interpreted and supported by Kinsey, might eventually lead to a new definition of sexual normality. Such a development would have been as repugnant to Freud as it is to Dr. Bergler. Indeed, what is notable about Dr. Bergler, as of most true disciples of Freud, is his conservatism. The desire to defend the traditional sexual morality is indicated in Dr. Bergler's criticism of Kinsey for his disregard of cultural standards and in the proposal to label "subversive" works of art destructive of accepted values. What was "sin" in the age of religion has become "sickness" in the age of science, but the substance has stayed the same. Such an analyst as the late Robert Lindner might observe how readily we create the illusion of progress merely by manufacturing new rationalisations for standing still—and how diverse are the devices for maintaining the sexual status quo.

Obviously, the way to enforce sex conformity is by "curing" homosexuals. To the moralist like Dr. Bergler, this is not only medically desirable but morally imperative. It is not only that homosexuals can be cured; they must be cured. And "cure" cannot mean for Dr. Bergler, as it does for many analysts, a satisfactory homosexual adjustment: Cure must mean a conversion to active heterosexuals when no homosexual remnants. Dr. Bergler's optimism about the possibility of effecting such conversions is the most sensational and most publicised aspect of the book.

The therapeutic method is derived from the theory of the masochistic source: "Separating the sexual desire from the masochistic concomitant kills homosexuality." The theoretical possibility of such "cures" is made stronger by the alleged non-existence of any true homosexual drive independently of the masochistic sub-structure.

The convertibility of homosexuals by psychoanalysis is asserted 13 times by count. The optimism is usually qualified by the phrase "provided the patient really wishes to change," or its equivalent. Dr. Bergler takes more than 20 pages to explain what that phrase means. Let no homosexual rush to Dr. Bergler seeking a "cure!" likely as not the good doctor will reject him as a bad therapeutic risk. Dr. Bergler claims they should "no longer accept for treatment every homosexual who presents himself, but instead avoid otherwise inevitable disappointments—both for themselves and for patient's—by making a selection..." That selection is to be made in a trial period (of 1 to 6 weeks) designed to investigate six aspects of the patient's condition to determine whether or not he satisfies the "eight pre-requisites for the psychoanalytical treatment of homosexuality." For example, the patient may believe that he wants to be "cured" but the analyst may find out that deep down inside he wants to stay homosexual.

What of the results? Of 130 who apparently passed the test of the trial period and were accepted for analysis, 30 cases were interrupted "either by myself or by the patient's leaving;" these presumably were the failures, where Dr. Bergler's estimate as to the suitability for treatment went wrong. One hundred analyses were "successfully concluded, presumably a "cure," or in other words, converted. This is an impressive number. It is less impressive, however, when viewed as the end result of a twice sifted sample. The first sifting occurred when the patient decided to seek analytical treatment. The second sifting occurred when Dr. Bergler weeded out those he did not consider good therapeutic risks. Since almost all of those who originally came to him had some reason to want to change, it is not surprising that a good proportion of those who finally were accepted for analysis successfully accomplished the conversion they sought.

When I asked an analyst I know—a most distinguished man in the profession—about Dr. Bergler, he remarked, "It takes me longer to read his books than it takes him to write them." I have no reason to believe that the analyst I am quoting is a particularly slow reader; he was simply commenting on the extraordinary productivity of Dr. Bergler who is rapidly writing his own 5-foot shelf—and perhaps suggesting that a slower pace might produce increased precision in thinking and clarity in expression.

For the theoretical portions of Dr. Bergler's book are frequently disorganised, repetitious and written in jargon (one difficulty is that he lifts whole sections from his other books). On the other hand, the case histories, however unrepresentative, are skillfully, even entertainingly written. Though intended to illustrate and confirm the theoretical formulations, the case histories gain added interest from the fact that they often include exactly those external and environmental factors which the theories rigidly exclude; they contain, in other words, much material for alternative explanations of homosexuality.

But no fair reader can fail to admire Dr. Bergler's capacity for observation, classification and generalisation. He has built a brilliant theoretical structure. Our admiration must be tempered however by our assessment of the adequacy of the supporting evidence and the validity of the underlying assumptions. What is most exasperating is Dr. Bergler's dogmatism. He recognises that "the ways of scientific discovery are admittedly tortuous; transitory errors and untenable theories are unavoidable." But he consistently gives the impression that all error ends with him.

The fact remains that he has not proved his case—not because his theories are necessarily untrue—but because in the present state of knowledge they are unprovable. The research which would confirm them has simply not been done. It is equally true that the research which would disprove and dispose of his theories has also not been done.

The first requisite for such research is that it be undertaken without bias. The second is that it should be a cooperative endeavor by analysts, anthropologists, biologists, historians and sociologists; Dr. Bergler's disregard of anthropological, biological and historical evidence argues alarmingly against any one-dimensional approach which may use research to "prove" a particular theory. Most importantly, future research must be based on the study of a scientifically selected cross section of homosexuals; not on the "neurotic volunteers" who, Dr. Bergler says, distorted Kinsey's sample—and who certainly distorted Dr. Bergler's.

In time, probably within our own time, we shall know to what extent Dr. Bergler—and the general viewpoint he represents—is true and to what extent it is nonsense. On the basis of present knowledge, any homosexual who uncritically accepts Dr. Bergler's thesis would indeed be a psychic masochist. On the other hand, any homosexual who, on the basis of present knowledge, utterly rejects or ridicules the whole approach would be demonstrating that unscientific reaction Dr. Bergler would expect. This much can be said: Any homosexual who makes a genuine effort to be open-minded, who is willing to go beyond self-justifying explanations of homosexuality, will find this a thought-provoking and often profoundly disturbing book,
Emotions that DESTROY

BY ALICE LAVERE

You have seen many times the changes that sudden fear will make instantaneously in a person’s face. It is not a pretty sight. You know how you feel when you are frightened. The changes that this upset condition bring about are both physiological and psychological.

Persons who live under these emotions continually actually effect changes in their chemistry that are among the causes of functional illnesses. Fear, worry, and doubt are among the most destructive emotions that we experience. These emotions are at the root of such chronic conditions as unhappiness, nervousness, temper tantrums, and lack of energy. These same emotions influence the flow of the endocrine gland system and change the delicate balance that means good health and clear thinking.

When one permits such destructive emotions to rule or influence most of his living the chances for health and happiness are reduced to practically nothing. Space will not permit the complete discussion of the multitudinous negative effects of fear upon the human personality. However you may be sure that when you observe the following reactions and characteristics, the person exhibiting them is living under a repressed fear thought. The most common of the repressed fear thought reactions are: revenge, jealousy, resentment, doubt, hate, stubborness, mental cowardice, procrastination, and alibi.

No one likes to admit to these negative and destructive activities, and it is usual for each of us to “cover-up” and camouflage our motives. The extra effort to effect this camouflage is one of the causes of tension. Tension, fear, doubt, and worry are present in most cases of heart failure, stroke, peptic ulcers, and other functional illnesses.

Because of the fear thoughts we harbor and the tension that is the natural result of fear, many of our plans and ambitions go wrong and we are forced to admit failure. At this stage the human personality has to add another destructive force to the list, frustration.

Here you have the unholy trio: fear, tension, and frustration. Each one is enough to cause a person to miss the mark he has set for himself. With all three at work it is little wonder that we live in a world full of the “almost-well” and the “half-way-successful.”

Fortunately there is a way to rid oneself of the emotional reaction to such impressions. And at the same time to build into the automatic reaction pattern of the individual the desired mental habit patterns. Let us say that you are the victim of a failure complex. So far in your life everything that has been important to you has not turned out well. You are being conditioned to expect that it will always be so. When something new turns up you say to yourself: “Well, it almost worked for me last time, maybe it will work this time,” and you start the same old routine that has almost worked for you for years. Naturally you are going to have the same result this time because you started out with the failure complex.

Now when it does fail, you will automatically rationalize and invent excuses for the failure. All of these excuses are real to you. And because they are real, no other idea will come to you to stop you from making the same old mistakes over and over again.

No one likes to discuss his failures. This makes it necessary to bury them deep in the subconscious. The constant placing of all failure patterns into the subconscious fills the individual with failure reaction patterns.

Success comes to some of us in a way that looks phenomenal to the casual observer. Yet each time we analyze the component parts of success, it is usually gained by following the rules.

As long as we consider ourselves intelligent, we admit that we are capable and willing to learn better ways to accomplish our purposes.

Now is the time to take stock of our personal inventory and to apply our intelligence to the purpose of making ourselves more productive and to realize the fruits of our labor.

By protecting ourselves through an understanding of our minds and bodies, we are able to prolong our best years, physically and mentally.

Each individual should learn to rid his mind of the fear thoughts that are tied up inside. It is these thoughts and the emotional results of these thoughts that are influential to a marked degree in cases of premature ageing, personality breakdown, and unsatisfactory relationships.

It is up to you to decide whether you are going to rule your emotions or let your emotions rule you.
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Ask Distinction Between Sexual Crimes and Sins

LONDON (NC)—The Home Office, British government ministry controlling the police and prosecution of crime, is considering a report submitted by a group of Catholic sociologists and priests on the legal punishment of crimes against sexual morality.

An important point of the report is the claim that "British criminal law does not seem to distinguish between sin, which is a matter of private morals, and crime, which is an offense against the state, having antisocial consequences."

The committee agreed that the distinction between personal sin and public crime is not always easy to define, but that it is "certainly ignored" in existing British legislation.

Present British penal law imposes penal sanctions for "acts of gross indecency done by consenting adult males in private."

The Catholic committee asserted that imprisonment is largely ineffective for reorien-

TRUTH?

As a cultural historian remarked recently: Something is true not because it has been repeated often, not because someone in authority has said it, not because it has been deduced from an infallible generality—but because it leads as accurately as possible to the kind of results we have in mind.
tating persons with homosexual tendencies and usually has a deleterious effect.

It pointed out that, with regard to prostitution, "the same principles apply, from the point of view of moral theology, as in connection with homosexuality. The distinction between sin and crime is equally valid regarding prostitution."

Without making any positive recommendations in this case either, the committee declared that the state does have a duty to protect women from exploitation and to preserve public order.

The existing practice of prosecution for soliciting and importuning is indefensible and should be discontinued, they said. Prosecution should be carried out in cases where sufficient evidence is available only, and in such cases the courts should be empowered to inflict suitable penalties.

**TRIVIAL FINES**

The present penalties are usually trivial fines without any detention whatever.

The committee added that while the homosexual must be shown every sympathy, he must never be allowed to think that he is doing no wrong.

"Morally evil things," concludes the report, "so far as they do not affect the common good are not the concern of the legislator. Attempts by the state to enlarge its authority and invade the individual conscience, however highminded, always fail and frequently do positive harm.

"It should accordingly be stated that penal sanctions are not justified for the purpose of attempting to restrain sins against sexual morality committed in private by responsible adults."

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**Mattachine Review**

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