

HOMOSEXUALITY (Male)

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Primary Disciplinary Field(s): Sociology, Psychology, and Sexology

1. Core Definition and Manifestations

Male homosexuality is defined by enduring physical, romantic, and/or emotional attractions to other men. Within the general population, the expression of homosexual attraction and behavior manifests across a continuum, distinguishing several forms of engagement. The first is the **latent type**, characterized by an inherent attraction to men that does not translate into overt sexual activity. This state reflects a potential orientation that is suppressed or unfulfilled due to social or internal constraints.

Beyond the latent type, behavioral patterns range from incidental and **transient contacts**, often occurring during specific developmental stages or under unique circumstances, to a complex mixture of homosexual and heterosexual relationships, where individuals seek sexual or emotional gratification from partners of both sexes concurrently or sequentially. At the far end of the spectrum is a completely **exclusive homosexual life**, where all primary sexual gratification and emotional commitment are achieved solely with other men.

Overt homosexual behavior frequently commences, particularly during formative years such as childhood and adolescence, with mutual masturbation, which is a common and widespread activity among these age groups. In certain instances, initial homosexual experiences may stem from seduction by an older homosexual, a dynamic often involving pedophilia, where the younger male assumes the passive role in oro-genital or ano-genital intercourse. These initial experiences, whether mutual or resulting from exploitation, contribute to the development of the individual's sexual narrative and subsequent patterns of behavior.

2. Early Research and Statistical Prevalence

Groundbreaking research conducted by Kinsey and his colleagues (1948) provided some of the earliest comprehensive data regarding the prevalence and incidence of male homosexual behavior in the United States. Their findings were pivotal in challenging established notions about the fixed nature of sexual orientation and the rarity of same-sex activity. The Kinsey study reported that a significant minority of males, specifically 37 per cent, admitted to having had some kind of homosexual experience that culminated in orgasm after the onset of adolescence. This figure illustrated the breadth of same-sex exploration beyond individuals who identified exclusively as homosexual.

Furthermore, the research identified a population segment engaged in sustained, exclusive homosexual activity. Kinsey reported that 8 per cent of the male sample had been exclusively

engaged in homosexual activity for a period of at least three years following the age of sixteen. This statistical finding indicated that while transient contacts were common, a measurable portion of the male population committed to an exclusively homosexual lifestyle during young adulthood.

A notable aspect of the Kinsey findings was the relative consistency of these figures across various demographic and geographic areas. The incidence and prevalence rates for homosexual experience were largely uniform in major cities, smaller towns, and rural areas throughout the country. This suggested that homosexual behavior was not merely an urban phenomenon but was distributed consistently across the social landscape, independent of density or specific cultural milieu.

3. Deconstruction of Sexual Roles and Stereotypes

Common public perception often operates on rigid stereotypes regarding the sex roles adopted by male homosexuals, but clinical and sociological observations reveal that these roles are far less fixed in reality than is generally believed. While a minority of men may exclusively adopt either a consistently masculine (active) or consistently feminine (passive) sexual and social role, the majority of homosexual men alternate between roles over time, displaying a fluidity in their behavioral patterns that defies strict categorization.

The stereotype of the "swish"--a man who walks, talks, and gestures in an overtly feminine manner and restricts himself to interests and occupations traditionally perceived as female--does exist, but it represents only a small fraction of the homosexual population. Contrary to popular opinion, the vast majority (estimated by some researchers to be around 85 per cent) cannot be identified as homosexual based purely on their appearance, public behavior, or vocational interests. Their presentation is conventionally masculine or indistinguishable from heterosexual peers.

This divergence between appearance and behavior extends even to those exhibiting physical effeminacy. Paradoxically, male homosexuals who appear more effeminate often assume the **active role** in sexual relationships, while ruggedly masculine homosexuals may frequently prefer the **passive role**. Furthermore, while some anatomical differences in secondary sex characteristics--such as broader hips or narrower shoulders--are present in a small minority, these characteristics do not affect the primary sex organs, nor do these men consistently adhere to a feminine role in social or sexual interaction. A distinct subset are transvestites, who derive sexual pleasure from wearing feminine clothes and makeup; however, even these individuals can maintain a completely masculine appearance and demeanor in their daily attire.

4. Psychosocial Distress and Internal Conflict

Despite outward appearances of acceptance or even defiance, practically all male homosexuals grapple with acute personal and psychological problems stemming from societal censure.

Individuals may outwardly accept their pattern of behavior, appearing bland or even flaunting their relationships publicly, yet they remain keenly aware of their position "outside the pale" of mainstream society. This awareness leads to a constant feeling of being judged, deeply feeling the disapproval of others even when it is not openly expressed.

This external pressure often translates into intense internal conflict. Many homosexuals adopt the common societal attitude that their orientation is "queer" or deviant, resulting in a continual but usually losing battle against their innate impulses. This internal struggle fosters a constant state of acute anxiety and psychological unrest. Conversely, others adopt a confrontational stance, fiercely defending their way of life and their right to choose their behavior.

However, even those who display bravado are typically insecure and apprehensive. They live under the pervasive threat of **detection**, which carries severe social consequences, including public humiliation, professional ruin, or the loss of employment. The constant necessity of managing a hidden identity or facing overt hostility generates high levels of stress and a chronic need for emotional support and reassurance.

5. The Quest for Emotional Security in Relationships

Due to the pervasive insecurity and the superficiality of typical clandestine encounters, homosexual men often seek deeper emotional connections. Many become dissatisfied with brief, impersonal interactions, such as five-minute contacts with strangers in public washrooms, or transient, "one-night stands" with casual acquaintances. This dissatisfaction fuels a quest for a more profound relationship and an enhanced sense of personal security, frequently leading to the attempt to establish a shared life with one partner.

These attempts at establishing monogamous arrangements, sometimes referred to as "marriages," rarely achieve long-term stability. The inherent tensions and external pressures often result in one or both partners straying from the commitment. When these relationships falter, the resulting displays of jealousy can be intense, and the ensuing quarrels are frequently noted for their volatility. Failure of one partnership usually leads the individuals to quickly seek another, resulting in lives characterized by a continuous series of intense, but short-lived, affairs.

While some seek serial monogamy, the majority of male homosexuals live alone, organizing their social and sexual lives around small, tightly-knit cliques. These cliques hold regular "parties" in various apartments, serving as the primary mechanisms for socialization, sexual gratification, and the exchange of partners within a semi-controlled environment. These gatherings offer a structured, albeit temporary, solution to the need for social belonging and sexual release.

6. The Homosexual Subculture and Social Institutions

For contemporary homosexuals, the greatest sense of stability and security often comes from belonging to a distinct social entity--a dedicated homosexual subculture. This subculture establishes its own internal standards, customs, shared history, and even a specialized language, providing an identity structure largely independent of mainstream society.

In large metropolitan areas, the subculture may support specialized commercial entities such as certain shops or designated public spaces like beaches. However, the most fundamental social institution is the "gay" bar. These establishments function as crucial hubs where members of the community can meet friends, exchange vital information regarding their social world, find potential partners, learn about the latest police activities or threats, and receive invitations to private parties.

These institutions are so critical to the social fabric that a homosexual planning to visit another city typically makes advance inquiries to locate these vital meeting places. While male homosexuals fundamentally desire relationships that offer some degree of security and permanence, the social environment and the customs of the subculture often discourage deep emotional involvement and long-term commitments, favoring instead the availability and flexibility afforded by transient connections.

Further Reading

[Homosexuality](#) (Wikipedia)

[Kinsey and his colleagues \(1948\)](#) (Wikipedia)

[Subculture](#) (Wikipedia)

[Sexology](#) (Wikipedia)