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**Bisexuality:
Negotiating Lives
Between Two
Cultures**

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ABSTRACT. In this paper I explore the emergence of two distinct Western cultures, gay and straight, emerging in the late 19th century and then developing through the first half of the 20th century until gay liberation in the late 1960s when the establishment of gay and lesbian "ethnic style" communities strengthened the heterosexual/homosexual dichotomy. I argue that the establishment of these two separate and recognisable cultures problematises social and cultural identities for those who are neither exclusively gay nor exclusively straight as well as those for whom desire is not primarily determined by gender. Moreover, challenges to the seeming naturalness of this dichotomy, primarily through poststructural queer theory and bisexuality, are met with resistance from both gay and straight communities. The tensions of trying to live bisexual lives between cultures for ordinary men often lead to a choice of attachment to either gay or straight culture and consequent silencing of bisexual desire. To illustrate my argument, in terms of negotiating lives between two cultures, I will use selected stories from my PhD research on men who have sex with men. *[Article copies available for a fee from The Haworth Document Delivery Service: 1-800-HAWORTH. E-mail address: <docdelivery@haworthpress.com> Website: <<http://www.HaworthPress.com>> © 2003 by The Haworth Press, Inc. All rights reserved.]*

KEYWORDS. Bisexual, homosexual, gay, heterosexual, culture, desire, postmodern, poststructural, history

INTRODUCTION

Given that this paper argues that being bisexual is problematised by the absence of a strong bisexual culture and the dominance of heterosexual and gay cultures, I want to firstly establish what I mean by culture.

Clifford Geertz, a cultural anthropologist, defines culture as "an historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols" enabling the development and perpetuation of knowledge and attitudes towards life through different forms of communication (Geertz 1973: 89). Stuart Hall, a sociologist and cultural theorist, refers to culture as the "actual, grounded terrain of practises, representations, languages and customs of any specific historical society" (cited in Nelson, Treichler, and Grossberg 1992: 5). James Clifford, a cultural anthropologist, refers to culture as being "contested, temporal, and emergent" (Clifford 1986: 19). From these definitions I take culture to be patterns

of meanings, meanings of everyday lived experiences, communicated through cultural discourses, embodied in language and other forms of cultural representations and embodiments, involving the production of particular knowledge, attitudes and beliefs and evolving and (re)emerging through generations. What is gay culture, what is straight culture and what is bisexual culture? Cultural constructions are always temporal, emergent and contested but what is clear is that the heterosexual/homosexual dichotomy separates gay cultures from straight cultures on with bisexuality struggling to find or develop a culture of belonging.

This paper is in two parts, the first explores the establishment of two distinct sexual cultures within Western societies since the late 19th century and the second illustrates the complexities of negotiating bisexual lives between these two cultures using stories from my PhD thesis.

**PART ONE:
THE HISTORY OF THE HETEROSEXUAL/
HOMOSEXUAL DICHOTOMY**

The Making of Two Sexual Cultures: Homosexual and Heterosexual

Although there is a long history of sex between men the homosexual as a distinct type of person considered to be different from other men was only constituted within Western discourses just over 100 years ago, in the late 19th century (Halperin 1990). Sex between men has been well documented from ancient Greece and Roman societies (Foucault 1985, 1986) and in different cultures (Herdt 1994) as well as in England prior to the 19th century (Norton 2000) but the term "homosexual," and therefore the heterosexual/homosexual dichotomy, was not constituted until the late 19th century. Foucault writes, in a well known phrase,

The nineteenth-century homosexual became a personage, a past, a case history, and a childhood, in addition to being a type of life, a life form and a morphology, with an indiscreet anatomy and possibly a mysterious physiology . . . the sodomite had been a temporary aberration; the homosexual was now a species. (Foucault 1998, 1978: 43)

The homosexual was now constituted as being different from other men; the act of sodomy became associated with this particular type of

male and not an act that "normal" men would engage in, the perverse and unnatural practises of homosexuality were now relegated to a separate category of men. This is a very significant even in the history of sexuality because it marks the establishment of the sexual dichotomy that has become the foundation of Western thought. Sedgwick argues that the establishment of this dichotomy marks the beginning of a whole cluster of crucial sites for contestations of meanings around other pairings such as secrecy/disclosure, private/public and same/different (Sedgwick 1990). David Halperin notes the significance of the establishment of this dichotomy and writes that "people belonged henceforward to one or the other of two exclusive categories" (Halperin 1990: 16).

Analysing and describing the homosexual person became the focus of the work of the early sexologists such as Karl Heinrich Ulrichs, Richard Krafft-Ebing, Havelock Ellis and Magnus Hirschfeld. The homosexual was constituted as a person who inverted the masculine in oneself, a kind of androgynous person with feminine mannerisms or an hermaphroditism of the soul (Foucault 1998, 1978). Two sexologists who were homosexual, Ulrichs and Hirschfeld, argued that homosexuals deserved the right to live free of medical and psychiatric intervention because their condition was biologically determined and unalterable (Nash and Lombardi-Nash 1999; Hirschfeld 2000), an argument that is maintained today through the research of people such as Simon LeVay and Dean Hamer (Hamer et al. 1993; LeVay 1991) and is also supported within some sections of gay communities through equal rights campaigns (see articles on queer theory and equal rights campaigns on Peter Tatchell's Website: Tatchell 2002).

The establishment of the heterosexual/homosexual dichotomy I would suggest had several consequences:

1. The constitution of homosexual desire as being different from heterosexual desire.
2. The silencing of bisexuality and bisexual desire because of its destabilising effect on the dichotomy.
3. The constitution of bisexuality as being transitional from heterosexuality to homosexuality.
4. The exclusion of sexual desire between men to homosexuality and the constitution of homophobia as a surveillance strategy to maintain heterosexual masculinity.

Early Challenges to the Heterosexual/Homosexual Dichotomy

Although the heterosexual/homosexual dichotomy developed ontological hegemony through medical, scientific and popular discourses there were two key researchers in the first half of the 20th century who challenged this belief, Sigmund Freud and Alfred Kinsey.

Freud refused to accept biological determinism in terms of sexuality, preferring to explore the importance of family, social and cultural influences on sexual development. For example, he could find no evidence of a biological link between the sexual instinct and the sexual object and became convinced of the human potential for a "polymorphous perversity" and an innate "bisexual disposition" (Freud 1977: 51&109). Moreover, he believed that all healthy persons had the capacity for a variety of sexual perversions, including homosexuality (Freud 1977: 74).

At around the time of Freud's death in 1939, a taxonomist, Alfred Kinsey began one of the largest studies of male and female sexuality ever undertaken (Kinsey, Pomeroy, and Martin 1998, 1948). Kinsey has been described as "the major factor in changing attitudes about sex in the twentieth century", a "trailblazer, openly and willingly challenging many basic societal beliefs", challenging the "medical and psychiatric establishments" and influencing the liberation movements of the 1960s (Bullough 1998: 130-131).

Kinsey applied a taxonomic approach to variations in human sexual behaviour that required a very large population sample, ideally around 100,000. Kinsey believed that sexual behaviour could be shown to vary along a continuum like many other human traits. When Kinsey published his first report on the sexual behaviour of males in 1948 (Kinsey, Pomeroy, and Martin 1998, 1948) he and his team had interviewed almost 6,000 men but unfortunately, because of the outrage over the findings, particularly in relation to homosexuality, and Kinsey's death in 1955, his work was never completed (Bullough 1998; Gathorne-Hardy 2000; Romesburg 1998).

Perhaps the most significant contribution that Kinsey's work made to sex research was the Kinsey Scale of sexual behaviour that modelled a continuum of desire from exclusive heterosexuality (zero) to exclusive homosexuality (six) (Kinsey, Pomeroy, and Martin 1998, 1948: 617). Moreover, Kinsey strongly disagreed with discrete categories of sexuality, arguing that there is the potential for considerable variations in desire and behaviour throughout the life course (Kinsey, Pomeroy, and Martin 1998, 1948: 656-657). This view is summarised in his most famous quote,

Males do not represent two distinct populations, heterosexual and homosexual. The world is not to be divided into sheep and goats. Not all things are black nor all things white. It is a fundamental of taxonomy that nature rarely deals with discrete categories. Only the human mind invents categories and tries to force facts into separate pigeon-holes. The living world is a continuum in each and every one of its aspects. The sooner we learn this concerning sexual behaviour the sooner we shall reach a sound understanding of the realities of sex. (Kinsey, Pomeroy, and Martin 1998, 1948: 641)

Significantly, Kinsey found that only about half of the male population interviewed had been exclusively heterosexual throughout their lives (Kinsey, Pomeroy, and Martin 1998, 1948: 616) and that this is probably an overestimate as most men reported at least *some* homosexual "experience" and many others were aware of their potential to be erotically aroused by other men (Kinsey, Pomeroy, and Martin 1998, 1948: 610). These findings challenged the belief that sexual desire between men was exclusively homosexual and dared to suggest that most, if not all, men are capable of being erotically aroused by other men. Being heterosexual was shown to be culturally influenced and not biologically determined as constituted within medical and scientific discourses. However, hegemonic heterosexual family culture was not to be destabilised by the Kinsey findings with Kinsey being labelled a communist and a threat to the American family. As Susan Moke notes, political conservatives, sensitized by McCarthyism, accused Kinsey of undermining the structure of the American family and thus preparing America for a communist takeover (Moke 1997).

Gay Liberation: Gay Culture Emerges from Heterosexual Oppression

While conservative heterosexual Americans were outraged by Kinsey's findings homosexual men viewed his work as liberating, enabling them to view themselves as normal healthy men. As Samuel Steward, a gay man who lived in Chicago in the 1950s and 1960s points out "We looked upon [Kinsey] as a savior. He was the liberator. He was our Stonewall" (Kissack and Evans 2000: 477).

Kinsey's work and the homophile movements of the 1950s can be viewed as the beginnings of gay liberation and the establishment of gay communities and culture. This era was followed by the 1960s and 1970s, two decades of activism and liberation, a time of massive social

changes within Western cultures in terms of black rights, gay rights and women's rights (a more detailed account of these movements can be found in the following texts: Carmichael and Hamilton 1968; Marcuse 1971; Salper 1972; Adam 1995).

The early 1970s was a time of sexual freedom, a time for the liberation of sexuality and sexual desire from the oppression of the heterosexual/homosexual dichotomy. Perhaps one of the best texts on the liberation of homosexuality is Dennis Altman's *Homosexual Oppression and Liberation* (Altman 1973). Altman argues that homosexual oppression is part of an overall sexual oppression and that liberation can only come from the breakdown of patriarchy and the heterosexual/homosexual dichotomy. Altman argues that a sexually liberated society would be based on a belief in a neo-Freudian polymorphous perversity where sexual identities would become obsolete and the nuclear family would be one of many ways in which social and community life would be organised (Altman 1973). However, this utopian view of a sexually liberated society was short lived as the fight for equal rights coalesced around activism and the establishment of separatist gay communities (Brown 2000). Ethnic style gay communities were established as sites of collective action for recognition of gay rights and social change. Rather than enabling the emergence of a polymorphously perverse and liberated society in which bisexuality would not be marginalised gay liberation reinforced the heterosexual/homosexual dichotomy.

Queer Activism: Polymorphous Perversity (Re)Emerges

Queer liberation and queer theory (re)emerged in the early 1990s out of ACT UP (AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power) and postmodern challenges to seemingly stable identities and desire. Queer liberation represents a desire to break free of the constraints and conservatism of both gay and straight cultures. Queer activism, known as Queer Nation, began in New York and spread rapidly but began to break up a year later because of its failure to manage the diverse queer agendas (Baker and Duignan-Cabrera 1991). The early manifesto of Queer Nation, "We hate straights," encapsulates Michael Warner's description of queer activism as a resistance to all "regimes of the normal" (Berlant and Freeman 1993; Warner 1993). Gay and lesbian equal rights campaigns reinforce heteronormative values, maintain the gay/straight cultural dichotomy and silence the needs of other queers. What seems clear following gay liberation is that the heterosexual/homosexual dichotomy

has been reinforced by the establishment of a distinct gay and lesbian culture and that other queer desires have become marginalised by both gay and straight cultures.

Bisexuality: Desiring Between Cultures

The establishment of two sexual cultures within Western thought since the late 19th century has problematised the meaning of desire for those whose sexual desires and attractions are for both genders. The history of bisexuality can be viewed as a history of erasure, a history in which sexual desire has become polarized as either heterosexual or homosexual with bisexuality being interpreted as precultural, primordial, or transitional between the other two sexualities (Angelides 2001). Theories of sexuality based on the gender of ones sexual object choice and the notion that persons can be attracted to only one gender at any particular moment in time fail to account for the complexity of desire as fluid, contextual, and multiple. Hocquenghem argues that desire only becomes interpreted as heterosexual or homosexual or bisexual "a posteriori, according to how we manipulate it" and describes desire as "an arbitrarily frozen frame in an unbroken and polyvocal flux" (Hocquenghem 1993: 50). Angelides presents a strong case illustrating how bisexual desire has been erased from sexuality discourses in the present tense in order to avert a crisis of meaning for the binary categories (Angelides 2001: 191). He concludes, after analyzing discourses of bisexuality from the early sexologists through to postmodernism, that "within the prevailing discourse of sexuality from sexology to gay liberation, bisexuality has functioned as the structural Other to sexual identity itself, that against and through which the identities of hetero- and homosexuality are constituted" (Angelides 2001).

PART TWO: NEGOTIATING SEXUAL LIVES BETWEEN TWO CULTURES

The following five stories come from my PhD thesis on men who have sex with men but do not identify as gay. While behaviour and self-identity have been used to recruit men for my thesis it is clear from their stories about their social and sexual lives that these terms have multiple meanings. Moreover, there are multiple variables that contribute to each person's sexual orientation in addition to behaviour and self-identity

such as sexual attraction, sexual fantasies, emotional preference, social preference and lifestyle (Klein 1993). The Klein Sexual Orientation Grid (KSOG) provides a useful model for exploring the multivariable and shifting nature of sexual orientation as well as enabling a deemphasising of sexual behaviour as being the key determinant of sexual orientation as suggested by Kinsey. A recent study using the KSOG involving female postgraduate students (Amestoy 2001) found that while there was a consistency between attraction, behaviour and current self-identity there was an inconsistency between social and emotional preferences and self-identity for heterosexual women but not for lesbians. While this is a limited study that needs replication with other larger samples it does indicate that for heterosexual men and women there is an inconsistency between sexual attraction, behaviour and identity and social and emotional preferences. Moreover, these inconsistencies may relate more to social and cultural limitations on desire than the nature of desire itself. The following stories evoke some of these complexities in finding a sense of self when desiring between cultures.

Preference to Remain Married

Many men chose to remain married because of a long history living within heterosexual culture and a strong preference to identify as heterosexual and continue socializing with other heterosexuals. Moreover, they express a deep love for and emotional attachment to their wives and families. They generally view their sexual behaviour with men as being purely physical and fun but not something that means that they are gay. An interpretation of their stories using the Klein variables enables a more balanced view of their sexuality than an emphasis on sexual behaviour alone.

at my age now . . . as far as sex and women . . . it's my wife only . . . because I really deeply love her . . . and I wouldn't do that to her because I know you could get . . . emotional problems with another woman . . . but I know I just don't feel emotional about men . . . it's just purely . . . just purely sex . . . I know it is . . . you know . . . I've got no other feelings but that . . . at all . . . and it's fact . . . that's why it's not got my conscience that bad that I can't do it . . . because I know it's just purely . . . it's probably helped . . . for me to have a happier life . . . home life now . . . because I feel . . . my wife said it's the job I'm in, new job . . . because it was stressful before . . . this is still stressful but I know . . . if Doug [his friend who he

has sex with] gives me a ring or I'll ring him . . . I'll be as happy as anything . . . knowing in my mind I'm doing something different and something that I like . . . so I won't go home and be heavily strained . . . I'm certainly a lot more placid and more settled. (Graham Foreman [early 50s, married with two adult children, workshop manager])

Apart from casual sex with men, Graham only desires sex with his wife because he deeply loves her and because he knows that having a sexual relationship with another woman could lead to an emotional relationship which he says he wouldn't do to his wife. An emotional relationship with another woman is constructed as involving romance and love as well as sex, drawing from heterosexual discourses of love and relationships. Graham says that he knows that his feelings towards men are not emotional; it's just purely physical, it's just sex, however, Doug is a friend, someone who he sees on a regular basis and, therefore, Graham does have an emotional relationship with him but it does not equal romantic love but more the love that is experienced between mates.

Coming Out as Gay

Some married men, however, do form romantic relationships with other men and come out as gay. This coming out of the marriage closet represents a move from heterosexual culture to gay culture with these men having to find a way of being gay after many years of marriage.

I used to do the beats a younger man . . . and I was raised in a hetero world . . . and I've been married for 28 years . . . still married but I only just came out as gay 18 months ago . . . my wife's still my best friend . . . but I've decided I want to live a gay life . . . it's the most natural thing for me . . . but I've been closeted gay if you will for most of my marriage . . . I formally came out and wrote a letter to GT [Adelaide GT] and you know . . . did all that . . . because I felt I had to . . . I came out to my kids and my kids are fine about it . . . but I still grew up as being . . . straight . . . but bisexual, if you will . . . that was within marriage until it became too much for me . . . you know . . . and it was time for me to do something about it. (Craig Burke [early 50s])

Craig says his wife is his best friend; they have a strong emotional bond that has been established over 28 years of marriage and shared

sexual experiences with other men in threesomes. However, Craig has decided he wants to live a gay life, he says that it's the most natural thing for him to do, he believes that he has been a closeted gay for most of his life and now wants to be gay sexually, emotionally, socially and psychologically. Craig says that he grew up being straight but bisexual but it became too hard to not be completely or fully gay so he decided to come out. Although Craig has a strong emotional bond with his wife that bond has now become one of friendship whereas the bond that he wants to form with a man is a romantic one. What Craig's story illustrates is that it is the notion of romantic love rather than the broader concept of emotional preference that is critical in determining ones preferred sexual orientation. A standard thesaurus (Microsoft Word) lists loving, passionate, tender, amorous, adoring, starry-eyed, idealistic and dreamy as synonymous to romantic suggesting a desire for an intimate coupled relationship with another person. Bisexual attraction and behaviour give way to a romantic preference to be with a man.

Gay Relationships Provide Sexual Freedom

For some bisexual men open gay relationships are preferred to heterosexual relationships because of experiences of jealousy and less freedom in relationships with women.

I never ever want to have a relationship with a woman again . . . um . . . I prefer blokes for a relationship and the reason for that is . . . men give you . . . men in general give you much more freedom . . . because they know what another blokes about and . . . they're not so restrictive . . . I mean women . . . you know . . . if you're married to a woman I couldn't go out and have sex . . . you know . . . and coming home and telling her about it . . . she'd be horrified . . . I mean there might be a rare woman that wouldn't care but it's not . . . generally they're not like that . . . well gay blokes . . . I think you can do that more easily with them . . . you know . . . so I'll never have a relationship with women again for that reason . . . I would just find that they'd be too restrictive . . . but sex, no problem . . . but I don't tend to pursue sex with women anymore and the reason why is a . . . as I said . . . I can just go out and find some bloke and have sex straight away but I couldn't do that with a woman . . . you'd have to plan and err . . . you know . . . plan everything with a woman . . . you could meet someone . . . and three months later you might get the sex . . . yet with a bloke it could be that minute . . . you know

what I mean . . . and I can't be fucked . . . just going through that process . . . so I tend to not to worry about it anymore . . . if it comes up . . . I would do it but . . . I don't . . . it doesn't seem to worry me if I don't get it . . . occasionally if I haven't . . . had sex with a woman for a while . . . I get urges . . . I want to and . . . no matter what bloke I get it's not . . . it doesn't you know . . . fulfil that need whatever it is . . . maybe it seems to be happening less and less I suppose . . . I don't know." (Stuart Gibson [40 years old, never married, working class background])

Stuart says that men in general give you much more freedom because they know what another blokes about, they understand that for men sex can be purely physical, fun and immediate and not an affair in the heterosexual sense of a romantic attachment. Moreover, Stuart can go out and have as much sex as he wants with other men and other women if possible and then go home and tell his partner all about it without him being shocked and horrified and thinking that he had been unfaithful in a heterosexual sense. Men, regardless of their sexuality, seem to be cultured to share sexual stories whereas women value intimacy and commitment over sexual freedom. A recent psychology study (Cann, Mangum, and Wells 2001) replicating previous work on distress in relation to sexual and emotional infidelity found that women were more likely to choose emotional infidelity as most distressing while men chose sexual infidelity as most distressing. What these studies show is the gendered differences in terms of the meanings of relationships within a heterosexual economy with women valuing emotional fidelity and men valuing sexual fidelity.

While Stuart has chosen an open gay relationship he tends to not have sex with women because of the different meanings attached to sex by most women. However, he says that not having sex with women for some time leads him to feel that there is something lacking in his life. Stuart would prefer to be bisexual but has been unable to negotiate his needs within either gay or straight culture.

Wanting a Girlfriend and a Boyfriend

Mark Henderson, like Stuart, has a strong desire to have a dual relationship with a man and a woman and worked to achieve such a relationship but found it too difficult to establish. Mark is a 35-year-old masculine man who lived within a very masculine heterosexual culture for most of his life but recently fell in love with a gay man and formed a

monogamous relationship with him but he felt that he could not be completely happy unless he could be in a relationship with a woman at the same time.

after my first few months with [male partner] I bumped into a . . . a bi lady . . . an old girlfriend of mine . . . who said that a friend of hers was coming to Adelaide and she said she likes men and girls and you might like to get together because . . . she knew that I was . . . my sexual nature . . . so we did get together and um . . . hit it off quite well . . . fucked ourselves stupid actually . . . for a couple of nights, um . . . and it was so nice to be with a woman . . . you know . . . because I hadn't been with a woman for quite some time . . . it felt like a long time . . . I had a chat with someone today . . . and she came out and admitted she's got a girlfriend and a boyfriend . . . so that gave me the idea . . . she tells me how she juggles the girlfriend and the boyfriend . . . if I can have a very lustful night of all the sexual intimacies and fulfilment with [male partner] you'd want and the next day . . . but the female thing . . . it's like I haven't had sex for years . . . the fact that I've had it . . . a very pleasant night and being fucked and everything . . . tingling all over and bloody all that and . . . the next day I feel like I haven't been intimate with a . . . I know with a man but the female thing . . . it's like and it's a strange thing because you think . . . come on you've just had a very intimate night with your boyfriend . . . surely you feel like you've had some sexual satisfaction but no. (Mark Henderson [35 years old])

Mark tried to have a girlfriend and a boyfriend at the same time because of his need or desire to be emotionally, sexually and psychologically intimate with a man and a woman but he was not able to successfully negotiate such a relationship so he has left his male partner and formed a relationship with a woman. To be bisexual behaviourally, emotionally and socially, when society has become divided into two monosexual cultures is difficult to negotiate.

Wanting Marriage and a Family

Some bisexual men, such as Keith Jarvis, have been in both gay and heterosexual relationships but because of a desire to be a father and have a family, now want to have a coupled relationship with a woman.

I've accepted . . . okay I've been with guys . . . I've been with girls . . . what do I really want now and I've thought . . . I'd prefer to be with a woman . . . I do like women's bodies . . . I do know how they sexually operate . . . from the emotional level into the sexual level . . . and I operate in that sense a bit more so too . . . um . . . I identify myself . . . I reckon I should have been born a . . . a woman but I was born a guy . . . so I identify now more with . . . my feminine aspect . . . I have no desire for a sex change . . . I've accepted . . . which is a great part of my journey . . . um . . . and I will . . . I have a great connection with the gay culture through . . . The Ed [gay pub] and the friends and the Mardi Gras and that will always be with me . . . that will always continue . . . and even . . . I will always be attracted to the great comfort I get in being at The Ed . . . among people of my own . . . even if I end up with a woman . . . I'll still . . . um . . . they'll be my people . . . I know I'll make a very good . . . father and a very good . . . equal partner to a woman . . . because of my experience living as a gay man . . . to use that term. (Keith Jarvis [35 years old])

Keith asks himself, "What do I really want?" after having been with men and women and having felt like a woman and has decided that he prefers women because they operate like him, from the emotional to the sexual. Keith says that his experiences with men have been different in that they have been sexually focussed and have lacked the emotional intimacy that he finds and prefers with women. However, socially and culturally he wants to be part of the gay and lesbian community because he says they are his people and have provided him with a sense of belonging.

CONCLUSION

The establishment of a sexual dichotomy within Western discourses from the late 19th century has led to the establishment of two distinct sexual cultures, heterosexual and homosexual or gay. Moreover, the history of the establishment of this sexual dichotomy shows that it emerged from medical and scientific discourses in which human sexual development is (re)presented as having an innate bisexual beginning and then progressing through to "normal" heterosexuality. Medical and scientific discourses were and remain hegemonic within what Butler re-

fers to as the heterosexual matrix or the "obligatory frame of reproductive heterosexuality" (Butler 1990: 136) through which

bodies, genders, and desires are naturalized . . . a hegemonic discursive/epistemic model of gender intelligibility that assumes that for bodies to cohere and make sense there must be a stable sex expressed through a stable gender (masculine expresses male, feminine expresses female) that is oppositionally and hierarchically defined through the compulsory practice of heterosexuality. (Butler 1990: 151 n6)

Moreover, the development of liberated sexual cultures and gay liberation in particular has reinforced the sexual dichotomy by establishing what Sedgwick calls the "minoritizing view" of same sex desire being characteristic of a small, distinct and relatively fixed minority of homosexuals rather than as an issue in the lives of people across the spectrum of sexualities, what Sedgwick refers to as the "universalizing view" (Sedgwick 1990: 1). Bisexuality has been erased from this history in the present tense because of its destabilising effect on the stability of the heterosexual/homosexual dichotomy (Angelides 2001).

The lives of men whose desires, fantasies, behaviours and emotional and social preferences are neither heterosexual nor homosexual are problematised by this sexual dichotomy and hegemonic reproductive heterosexuality. Consequently, these men make choices of best cultural fit in terms of living within either gay or straight culture depending on the importance they place on their emotional, social, relational and sexual preferences.

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