

Homosexuality



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The subject of homosexuality, and especially male homosexuality, has received a great deal of publicity in England and America. The furor began with Kinsey's famous reports on sexual behavior, which brought out the fact that a far higher proportion of the population than was commonly supposed deviated from accepted standards of normality and morality. Taking courage from the apparent safety of large numbers, the sexually unorthodox and their sympathizers began to challenge the criteria of normality, and to question whether sexual habits that were widespread and so deeply entrenched could justifiably be written off as immoral. D.J. West's *Homosexuality* dissects the myths and paranoia surrounding this topic by examining the nature and roots of homosexuality. The politico-legal controversy has tended to overshadow the more fundamental psychological questions concerning the nature and causes of homosexuality. In this field, no striking discoveries have resulted from the increased public interest. Nevertheless, a body of factual data has accumulated, and a number of theories are available. The author's main purpose is to summarize as clearly as possible what is known, to draw what practical conclusions may be possible, and to point out where we are still groping and ignorant. This book deals mainly with male homosexuality because in men the condition causes more clear cut social problems and has been studied more intensely by psychiatrists. Unfortunately, though strongly

held opinions abound, hard facts about homosexuality and its possible causes are difficult to obtain. Even now, serious medical and sociological investigations in this subject are scandalously few considering the importance of the questions in human terms. Until a large section of the public is prepared to face the facts squarely and rationally and to support adequate research, our knowledge will remain rudimentary.

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