

particularly valuable, if another follow-up study of the patients were made by one or two observers who, this time, could contact the patients direct as their psychoanalytic treatment is likely to have terminated by now.

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Die Homosexualität beim Mann. By KURT FREUND. Leipzig: S. Hirzel Verlag. 1963. Pp. 275.

This book is an expanded version in German, and published in Eastern Germany, of a study of male homosexuality which appeared in the Czech language in 1962. Readers of Eysenck's *Behaviour Therapy and the Neuroses* may recall the chapter by Freund on the treatment of homosexuality. Professor Freund of the Carls University in Prague is a leading authority on his subject. It was partly through his influence that Czech law was amended recently, removing the threat of imprisonment from most adult male homosexuals. Czechoslovakia thereby joined 32 other countries from Abyssinia, Argentine and Belgium to Spain, Turkey and Venezuela where this was already the case.

His book is directed to medical men, psychologists, social workers and lawyers. It is cautious and scientific in its approach and, as Professor Hanns Schwarz states in his foreword, has a welcome freedom from speculative interpretation. It consists of a presentation of his own analytical and experimental work on a series of 222 male homosexuals seen in the University psychiatric clinic in Prague and a review of the world literature on the subject. There are 506 references ranging from the early German sexologists to recent British and American work.

In his first chapter he describes the clinical picture by means of illustrative case histories and goes on to discuss the occurrence of homosexuality in other races and other species. Homoerotic behaviour is surprisingly frequent, but much of it occurs in situations where heterosexual outlets are effectively barred. Though most persons have the capacity to react physically to either sex, homosexual attraction is usually decidedly weaker than heterosexual. Bisexuality, by which Freund means an equally strong attraction to either sex at the same point of time, is rare. The balance falls one way or the other; and the homosexual who is seen in court or clinic is as little heterosexual as the average man is homosexual.

One hundred and one cases in the series came to the clinic because they were in trouble with the law or had compromised themselves in some way. Nearly

as many, 99, claimed to have been under no external pressure in enquiring about treatment for their condition. Only nine came to attention on account of neurotic illness.

The material is divided up according to the presence of feminine personality traits, narcissism and various features of upbringing and development, the age of first homosexual interest and activity, the attitude to women and the preferred age and most admired characteristics of the partner. The method of intercourse preferred was oral, anal, interfemoral and manual in that order of frequency, and the preferred role in order of frequency was passive, active and mutual. Femininity was assessed according to the answers to a set of questions, systematically asked, concerning matters such as childhood preferences for girls' games, toys and companionship. These questions clearly distinguished the group of homosexuals from groups of neurotics and normals.

The findings on one variable are then compared with those on others. The main outcome of this analysis is that the homosexual with feminine traits, when compared with the others, shows an earlier manifestation of homosexual interest, a preference for the passive role and for a more mature and manly partner, and a lesser likelihood of being attracted sexually either by women or boys. Freund does not consider the feminine and non-feminine to be two separate conditions but to represent extremes of the same condition, the feminine-identified being the more deviant. The conclusion itself is perhaps of less interest than some of the detailed findings reported about the lives and preferences of the subjects.

Professor Freund draws attention to the limitations of drawing conclusions solely from the unverified statements of patients. He goes on to describe an objective psychophysiological method of diagnosis. The subject is shown photographs of naked men, women and children, while a plethysmograph records fluctuations in the volume of the penis. Various groups of homosexuals, neurotics and non-psychiatric heterosexuals were exposed to a procedure of this kind. The author believes the method may be of value in cases of possibly socially dangerous deviations and whenever homosexuality is claimed as a reason for release from military service.

A chapter is devoted to the relation between homosexuality and psychiatric disorders. Though homosexuals may be liable to react in a neurotic or depressive way to their social circumstances, there is no evidence of a more basic association. The author's psychophysiological test showed no evidence of homosexual attraction in a group of paranoid patients or in a group of neurotics suspected of homosexual tendencies.

Fifty pages are given to discussion of a wide range of biological and psychosocial theories of the aetiology of homosexuality. Freund considers a genetical basis to be likely in most cases. The condition could "rest mainly on an inborn incapacity to utilize those early childhood experiences which normally lead to heterosexual desires".

So far as treatment is concerned biochemical and physical methods tried so far have proved useless. From the nature of the condition any extensive heterosexual re-orientation is unlikely to be effective. However, just as in prisons and ships homosexual activity can occur among persons who in normal circumstances would be exclusively heterosexual, so persons who would otherwise be exclusively homosexual can learn in certain circumstances to suppress homosexual manifestations and form heterosexual attachments of a substitute kind. Insofar as psychotherapy of any kind has a limited success, it is likely to be due to the discouragement of the one and encouragement of the other kind of sexual behaviour. Freund therefore devised a simplified method of treatment based on this principle. Pictures of nude males were shown after injection of an emetic, pictures of nude females after an aphrodisiac. Freund claims that the results of this treatment are at least as good (or as poor) as those of other psychotherapeutic methods. The only group to achieve any success was that consisting of 31 patients who had been under no external compulsion to attend the clinic. Eleven of them reached some degree of heterosexual adaptation lasting for years, though not always without relapse. Indication for therapy is nevertheless exceptional. One of the criteria of heterosexual adaptation is successful marriage, and the marriages of homosexuals rarely fail to break down, according to the data given here. The author remarks that therapists are apt to give their fantasy free play in theorizing about aetiology. If Professor Freund avoids this error, he certainly avoids any undue therapeutic optimism.

J. SHIELDS.

Over the Sex Border. By GEORGINA TURTLE.
London: Victor Gollancz Ltd. 1963. Pp. 319.
Price 30s.

Most psychiatrists have been faced at one time or another with the problem of the transsexualist patient whose conviction, that through some unfortunate biological error his feminine personality has been imprisoned in an outwardly male body, has a near-delusional quality. As in most other forms of sexual deviation, the majority of subjects are male. It is indeed open to doubt whether pure trans-

sexualism occurs in women since most feminine candidates for change of sex operations are practising homosexuals who wish to have social or legal sanction for an established Lesbian partnership. These patients bring to bear an astonishing pertinacity and determination in the achievement of their aims, and the problems they present to the psychiatrist are often baffling and poignant. Some have high intelligence and artistic sensibility and plead their case as one of simple, self-determination; each individual should have the right to choose for himself the sexual identity that harmonizes best with his personality and promotes the greatest happiness and fulfilment. A number of reports claiming that operations are followed by improved social and personal adjustment appear to lend force to the patient's plea. On the other hand, a systematic, long-term evaluation of the results has nowhere been carried out and some reports have described dissatisfaction and requests for a reversal of the "sex change". A number of patients have exploited their experiences by publishing sensational, exhibitionistic and sexually titillating life histories; at least one of these contained falsehoods and distortions, and none can have been very helpful to genuine sufferers. Medical men who have sanctioned operations or have been compelled to repair the effects of attempted self-castration, have been almost invariably exposed to unrelenting demands for further plastic surgery to perfect the transmutation. A less than scrupulous transsexualist may, after operation, pose as a normal woman or as a hermaphrodite rendered wholly feminine by surgery and marry an unsuspecting and unsophisticated partner. It would seem also that among those treated surgically there has been the occasional psychopath who has taken to prostitution. Even if the medical and psychological problems presented by these patients could be resolved by surgery, and this is open to question, no responsible psychiatrist or plastic surgeon could fail to be daunted by these social implications of operations for "change of sex".

We learn from the dust-jacket that the author was an ex-Naval dental surgeon who underwent a "change of sex" operation at the age of 37 and was married two years later to an engineer. However, the book contains no direct reference to her own experiences. We are left to guess the nature of the disability that necessitated the operation, nor are we acquainted with its effects on her social, psychological or sexual adjustment. Miss Turtle has chosen, instead, to write a comprehensive treatise on the subject of "change of sex", a task for which neither her qualifications nor her powers of critical judgment appear adequate. The greater part of the book is devoted to transsexualism and its treatment is dis-