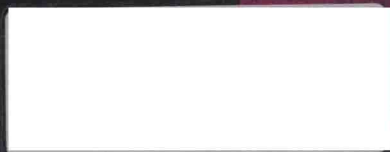


LESBIAN & GAY PSYCHOLOGY

NEW PERSPECTIVES



Edited by Adrian Coyle and Celia Kitzinger



BPS Blackwell

W10.1
90

Lesbian and Gay Psychology

New Perspectives

Edited by Adrian Coyle and Celia Kitzinger



BPS Blackwe..

© 2002 by Blackwell Publishers Ltd
except for editorial arrangement and introduction © 2002 by Adrian Coyle and
Celia Kitzinger
A BPS Blackwell book

Editorial Offices:
108 Cowley Road, Oxford OX4 1JF, UK
Tel: +44 (0)1865 791100
350 Main Street, Malden, MA 02148-5018, USA
Tel: +1 781 388 8250

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, except as permitted by the UK Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988, without the prior permission of the publisher.

First published 2002 by The British Psychological Society and Blackwell Publishers Ltd,
a Blackwell Publishing company
Transferred to digital print 2004

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data has been applied for

ISBN 1405102217 (hbk)
ISBN 1405102225 (pbk)

A catalogue record for this title is available from the British Library.

Set in Palatino
by Book Production Services, London

For further information on
Blackwell Publishers, visit our website:
www.blackwellpublishers.co.uk

Lesbian and Gay Psychology

List of contributors

Peter Aggleton is Professor in Education and Director of the Thomas Coram Research Unit at the Institute of Education, University of London. He has worked internationally in the field of health promotion for over 20 years. He has written and edited over 20 books and is the editor of the journal *Culture, Health & Sexuality* and the series editor (and the co-editor of individual volumes) of the *Social Aspects of AIDS* books (published by Taylor & Francis/Falmer).

Victoria Clarke is a PhD candidate in the Department of Social Sciences at Loughborough University. Her research examines the social construction of lesbian and gay parenting. In 2000, she won the British Psychological Society's Lesbian & Gay Psychology Section inaugural postgraduate prize.

Adrian Coyle is Senior Lecturer and Joint Course Director of the Practitioner Doctorate in Psychotherapeutic & Counselling Psychology in the Department of Psychology at the University of Surrey. Before moving into academia, he worked in HIV/AIDS research, counselling and education. He was one of a group of psychologists (including Celia Kitzinger, Martin Milton, Ian Rivers and Sue Wilkinson) whose campaigning efforts resulted in the establishment of a Lesbian & Gay Psychology Section within the British Psychological Society in 1998 and he is now the co-editor (with Elizabeth Peel) of its publication, *Lesbian & Gay Psychology Review*. His own publications have addressed various issues within lesbian and gay psychology (with a focus upon identity issues, psychological well-being and experiences of therapy), HIV/AIDS, bereavement and qualitative research methods.

Anthony R. D'Augelli is a community psychologist in the Department of Human Development and Family Studies at Pennsylvania State University. He is co-editor (with Charlotte J. Patterson) of *Lesbian,*

Gay, and Bisexual Identities Over the Lifespan: Psychological Perspectives (1995), *Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Identities in Families: Psychological Perspectives* (1998) and *Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Identities and Youth: Psychological Perspectives* (2001) (all published by Oxford University Press).

Sonja J. Ellis is a Lecturer in Psychology in the School of Social Science and Law at Sheffield Hallam University. Prior to emigrating to the UK, she completed her Bachelor and Master of Social Sciences degrees at the University of Waikato in New Zealand. She completed her PhD at Loughborough University in 2001. Her research within lesbian and gay psychology has focused on lesbian coming out experiences and reasoning about lesbian and gay (human) rights issues.

Brendan Gough is a Lecturer in Qualitative Psychology in the School of Psychology at the University of Leeds. He gained his PhD (on Postmodernism, Social Psychology and Everyday Life) from the School of Psychology at the Queen's University, Belfast in 1993 and took up his first lecturing post at Sheffield Hallam University in 1994, where he taught critical social psychology and qualitative research methods. At Sheffield Hallam, he also initiated the men, masculinities and discourse project - a series of studies by staff and research students which critically explored the social construction of masculinities. In 2000, he took up his present post at the University of Leeds, where he teaches on the newly-developed masters degree in qualitative psychology. His publications to date have focused on the discursive reproduction of sexism, homophobia and male victimhood; with Majella McFadden, he has co-authored a textbook on *Critical Social Psychology: An Introduction* (2001, Macmillan). He continues to research aspects of men and masculinities (such as fatherhood and men's health) and is interested in raising student awareness of qualitative methods and critical approaches to psychology.

Christine Griffin is Senior Lecturer in Social Psychology at the University of Birmingham. Her research interests include young people's experiences of transitions to adulthood, especially for young women; academic and popular representations of youth; feminist perspectives on gender relations; the use of qualitative methods; and the relationship between academics and others working in a professional capacity with young people. She is one of the founding editors of the international journal *Feminism & Psychology* and her publications include *Typical Girls?* (1985, Routledge and Kegan Paul) and *Representations of Youth* (1993, Polity Press). Her research has addressed a number of issues

relevant to lesbian and gay psychology, such as the implications of compulsory heterosexuality for young women; lesbians' accounts of their experiences in psychology (with Miriam Zukas); the impact of anti-lesbianism in women's reluctance to identify as feminist; and the role of same-sex desire in young women's friendships.

Celia Kitzinger is Professor of Conversation Analysis, Gender and Sexuality in the Sociology Department at the University of York. She has published nine books and around 100 articles and book chapters on issues related to gender and sexuality. She is the recipient of a Distinguished Publication Award from the Association for Women in Psychology (for her book *The Social Construction of Lesbianism* [1987, Sage]) and a Distinguished Scientific Contribution Award from Division 44 of the American Psychological Association for her contributions to lesbian psychology. She was one of a group of psychologists (including Adrian Coyle, Martin Milton, Ian Rivers and Sue Wilkinson) whose campaigning efforts resulted in the establishment of a Lesbian & Gay Psychology Section within the British Psychological Society in 1998 and is the inaugural Chair of the Section.

Charles Legg is Senior Lecturer in Psychology at City University, London. He graduated in Psychology from Birkbeck College, London, in 1970, obtained his DPhil from Oxford in 1975 and became a Chartered Counselling Psychologist in 1995, after completing the training programme at City University. He teaches on the Advanced Diploma in the Practice of Counselling Psychology at City University and supervises a number of candidates on the DPsych in Counselling Psychology there. His current research involves the analysis of power relations in discourse in and about therapy, based on Foucauldian principles.

Maeve Malley is a systemic psychotherapist and supervisor. She is currently working on a Doctorate in Psychotherapy at Birkbeck College, University of London, examining the use of counselling and therapy by lesbians and gay men.

Laura A. Markowe is Senior Lecturer in the Division of Psychology within the Faculty of Humanities and Social Science at South Bank University in London. She has a PhD from the London School of Economics and Political Science (University of London) and is the author of *Redefining the Self: Coming Out as Lesbian* (1996, Polity Press).

Damian McCann is a systemic psychotherapist, supervisor and trainer and is currently employed as Principal Family and Systemic

Psychotherapist in the Department of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry at Edgware Community Hospital. He is a Clinical Supervisor at the Institute of Family Therapy in London and at the Oxford Family Institute; he was also Co-Founder of the Lesbian and Gay Family Service in London. He is also currently a PhD candidate at Birkbeck College, University of London, researching prospective gay fathers.

Martin Milton is Senior Lecturer and Joint Course Director of the Practitioner Doctorate in Psychotherapeutic & Counselling Psychology in the Department of Psychology at the University of Surrey. He is a Chartered Counselling Psychologist and Registered Psychotherapist and is attached to North East London Mental Health Trust. His specialist interests include lesbian and gay affirmative psychology and psychotherapy, HIV-related psychotherapy and existential psychotherapy. He has been Chair of the British Psychological Society's Division of Counselling Psychology's Standing Committee for Professional Affairs (1994-1998) and has been a member of the Division's Executive Committee (1998-1998). He was one of a group of psychologists (including Adrian Coyle, Celia Kitzinger, Ian Rivers and Sue Wilkinson) whose campaigning efforts resulted in the establishment of a Lesbian & Gay Psychology Section within the British Psychological Society in 1998.

Elizabeth Peel is a PhD candidate in the Department of Social Sciences at Loughborough University and a facilitator of anti-heterosexism training. Her research focuses on the discursive construction of heterosexism and liberalism within lesbian and gay awareness training. She obtained her joint honours degree in Psychology and Sociology and a diploma in Applied Psychology from the University of Nottingham in 1997. She is currently co-editor (with Adrian Coyle) of *Lesbian & Gay Psychology Review* – the publication of the British Psychological Society's Lesbian & Gay Psychology Section.

Ian Rivers is Senior Lecturer in Social Psychology within the School of Sports Science and Psychology at York St John College. He took his first degree in Educational and Community Studies and History at the College of Ripon and York St John (now York St John College) before reading Psychology at the University of Liverpool. He obtained his PhD from the Roehampton Institute, London in 1999 (now the University of Surrey, Roehampton) where he studied the psychosocial correlates and long-term implications of school bullying for lesbians, gay men and bisexual men and women. He was one of a group of psychologists (including Adrian Coyle, Celia

Kitzinger, Martin Milton and Sue Wilkinson) whose campaigning efforts resulted in the establishment of a Lesbian & Gay Psychology Section within the British Psychological Society in 1998. He has published widely in the field of lesbian, gay and bisexual developmental issues and co-ordinates an ESRC-funded seminar series entitled 'Researching lesbian, gay and bisexual issues in statutory, further and higher education'.

Fiona Tasker is a Lecturer in Psychology at Birkbeck College, University of London. She completed her PhD at the University of Cambridge and was a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at City University, London. Her previous publications include papers on children of divorce and children in lesbian and gay families. With Susan Golombok, she is the co-author of *Growing Up in a Lesbian Family: Effects on Child Development* (1997, Guilford). Her current research (funded by the Wellcome Trust) involves a study of gay fathers and their sons and daughters.

Gary Taylor is a Clinical and Health Psychologist, currently employed as Assistant Director of Psychological Services at the University of Sussex, where he is also Director of an MSc programme in Counselling Psychology. Having read Developmental Psychology at the University of Sussex, Gary trained as a Clinical Psychologist with South Thames Regional Health Authority, acquiring his Practitioner Doctorate in 1995. He spent the next three years employed within the NHS in Brighton where he worked primarily with those affected by sexual and physical health problems - including HIV/AIDS - and with men who had been sexually abused or raped. His professional appointments and publications to date reflect his wide-ranging clinical, theoretical and research interests but most notably his interest in social constructionism and issues relating to sexuality, gender and health.

Ian Warwick is a Senior Research Officer at the Thomas Coram Research Unit and Associate Director of the Education Policy Research Unit, both at the Institute of Education, University of London. He has been involved in AIDS-related research since 1986. His research interests include identifying young people's sexual health needs and concerns in developing countries, lifeskills education in central and eastern Europe and developing programmatic approaches to gay men's HIV prevention in London. He is the co-author and editor of numerous reports, articles and books, including *AIDS: Working with Young People*, *Health Promotion with Young People: An Introductory Guide to Evaluation* and *Young People and Mental Health*.

Sue Wilkinson is Professor of Feminist and Health Studies in the Department of Social Sciences at Loughborough University. She was one of a group of psychologists (including Adrian Coyle, Celia Kitzinger, Martin Milton and Ian Rivers) whose campaigning efforts resulted in the establishment of a Lesbian & Gay Psychology Section within the British Psychological Society in 1998. She is the founding and current editor of the international journal *Feminism & Psychology* and is the author/editor of six books, including *Feminist Social Psychologies: International Perspectives* (1996, Open University Press) and, with Celia Kitzinger, *Representing the Other* (1996, Sage) and *Heterosexuality* (1993, Sage).

Foreword

The Cutting Edges of Lesbian and Gay Psychology

Anthony R. D'Augelli

In some respects, the psychological study of lesbian and gay lives has a short history (but see Chapter 1 in this volume). The landmark work of Evelyn Hooker published in the 1950s (for example, Hooker, 1957) was the first to use a traditional psychological research design – an experimental comparison by expert psychodiagnosticians of the projective test responses of matched heterosexual and gay men – in testing a hypothesis with profound importance for lesbian and gay lives. This research provided the empirical foundation for the removal of homosexuality from the American Psychiatric Association's list of mental disorders years later in 1973. Following Hooker, the application of social science methodologies to the study of homosexuality would wait many years and was taken up systematically by several studies conducted by the Kinsey Institute (Weinberg and Williams, 1974; Bell and Weinberg, 1978), including the first to attempt to model developmental pathways to same-sex sexual orientations (Bell *et al.*, 1981). Thereafter, studies were initiated by individual researchers, who often jeopardized their careers by conducting the research. Using convenience samples (which were exceedingly difficult to obtain given the intense social stigmatization of lesbian and gay people), researchers attempted to understand the complex psychological issues facing lesbians and gay men. Among the most important studies of this era was the first paper on the psychosocial experiences of children raised by lesbian mothers (Golombok *et al.*, 1983). This was a landmark study in several ways. It demonstrated the need to go beyond an understanding of gay individuals to attend to core social units (in this case, lesbian mother-child dyads). It also documented the very existence of lesbian mothers and their children in society at a time when these families were neither part of the cultural landscape nor part of the agendas of researchers studying 'normal' children or families. Similar accomplishments can be attributed to *The Male Couple* (McWhirter and Mattison, 1984), which reported a study that documented the existence of long-standing same-sex couples. At the end of the 1980s, another revolutionary research project appeared –

Kitzinger's (1987) analysis of the nature of lesbian identities, a work that challenged both the ideology and the methodology of psychological researchers. Other studies carried out prior to the 1990s could be mentioned. Suffice to say that by the beginning of the 1990s, enough psychological research had appeared to merit an edited volume (Gonsiorek and Weinrich, 1991) summarizing work that could inform social policy about sexual orientation. Furthermore, it would be beyond the scope of these comments to attempt to review the voluminous empirical research that has appeared in the last decade. An interested reader can consult several volumes (for example, Greene and Herek, 1994; D'Augelli and Patterson, 1995, 2001; Patterson and D'Augelli, 1998).

As more research has accumulated, increasing demands have been placed upon research findings to help charter rational approaches through the often volatile waters of societal discussions of homosexuality. The protection of women and men from discrimination and violence based on their sexual orientation, the determination of the age at which sexual behaviour is legal, the inclusion of education about sexual orientation in schools, the nature of same-sex committed relationships and their social value and the impact of growing up within families headed by lesbian or gay parents are among the issues that current research has influenced. Such research has served to prevent bias and bigotry from perpetuating unfair social practices and has led the way to an affirmative psychological approach that emphasizes the strengths of lesbians and gay men, their significant others and their communities. Psychological research on lesbians and gay men has thus been at the cutting edge of social change.

The cutting edge of lesbian and gay psychology is not only directed to social problems but to psychology itself for, until the assertion of a lesbian and gay psychology, psychology was blind to variability in human sexual orientations. The construct was not considered essential to psychological models of human development and behaviour. Because of the stigmatizing of non-heterosexual orientations, no variations in this domain were considered. Now, however, psychological knowledge can be challenged on heterosexist grounds. Just as queer theorists in the humanities have, since the early 1990s, challenged traditional readings of texts for their motivated erasure of homoerotic desire, lesbian and gay psychologists challenge the heterosexism of traditional psychological research and practice. The analysis of every substantive area covered in this volume – development during adolescence, girls' friendships, identity formation and disclosure, parenting and family issues, health issues, psychotherapeutic and other interventions and social attitudes – will need to include findings such as those reported by the psychologists (and other social scientists) represented here. It is no longer intellectually (not to mention empirically) possible to maintain heterosexual hegemony in psychological research. Research in lesbian

and gay psychology has the potential to reinvent identity and social processes (including development over the lifespan and the nature of the family) by declaring the existence of different sexual orientations. The field of psychology cannot go back. The weight of the evidence is clear.

The challenge of a lesbian and gay psychology as represented in these chapters goes beyond the ideological to the methodological. A powerful interplay of qualitative and quantitative methods is apparent here; indeed, there may be a critical distinction between British lesbian and gay psychology and its American counterpart in the pre-eminence of qualitative methods and the frequent use of an explicitly deconstructionist approach in British work. Both the ideographic and the nomothetic are required but, in a lesbian and gay psychology, these approaches are deemed epistemologically equivalent. The multiplicity of approaches may reflect an historical dynamic in which the quest for secure (and valued) sexual identity conflicts with an understanding that security in sexual matters is not to be trusted. An unstable cutting edge will be the rule, not a temporary exception. As new dimensions of sexuality are constructed/discovered by psychological researchers, new questions will arise. The assertion of a lesbian and gay psychology is assured in the interplay of qualitative and quantitative methods; using the approaches together, it becomes less possible to marginalize variability in psychological experience. Lesbian and gay psychology, with its relatively short history, is apparently on its way to a long future indeed.

References

- BELL, A.P. and WEINBERG, M.S. (1978) *Homosexualities: A Study of Diversity Among Men and Women*. New York: Touchstone Books.
- BELL, A.P., WEINBERG, M.S. and HAMMERSMITH, S.K. (1981) *Sexual Preference: Its Development in Men and Women*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- D'AUGELLI, A.R. and PATTERSON, C.J. (Eds) (1995) *Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Identities Over the Lifespan: Psychological Perspectives*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- D'AUGELLI, A.R. and PATTERSON, C.J. (Eds) (2001) *Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Identities and Youth: Psychological Perspectives*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- GOLOMBOK, S., SPENCER, A. and RUTTER, M. (1983) Children in lesbian and single-parent households: Psychosocial and psychiatric appraisal. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 24, 551-572.
- GONSIOROK, J.C. and WEINRICH, J.D. (Eds) (1991) *Homosexuality: Research Implications for Public Policy*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- GREENE, B. and HEREK, G.M. (Eds) (1994) *Lesbian and Gay Psychology: Theory, Research, and Clinical Applications*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- HOOVER, E. (1957) The adjustment of the male overt homosexual. *Journal of Projective Techniques*, 21, 18-31.

- KITZINGER, C. (1987) *The Social Construction of Lesbianism*. London: Sage.
- McWHIRTER, D.P. and MATTISON, A.M. (1994) *The Male Couple: How Relationships Develop*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- PATTERSON, C.J. and D'AUGELLI, A.R. (Eds) (1998) *Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Identities in Families: Psychological Perspectives*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- WEINBERG, M.S. and WILLIAMS, C.J. (1974) *Male Homosexuals: Their Problems and Adjustment*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Contents

<i>List of contributors</i>	vii
<i>Foreword: The cutting edges of lesbian and gay psychology</i> <i>Anthony R. D'Augelli</i>	xiii
1. Introducing lesbian and gay psychology <i>Celia Kitzinger and Adrian Coyle</i>	1
2. Developmental issues for lesbian and gay youth <i>Ian Rivers</i>	30
3. Girls' friendships and the formation of sexual identities <i>Christine Griffin</i>	45
4. Coming out as lesbian <i>Laura A. Markowe</i>	63
5. Lesbian and gay parenting <i>Fiona Tasker</i>	81
6. Resistance and normalization in the construction of lesbian and gay families: A discursive analysis <i>Victoria Clarke</i>	98
7. Lesbian health <i>Sue Wilkinson</i>	117
8. Gay men's physical and emotional well-being: Re-orienting research and health promotion <i>Ian Warwick and Peter Aggleton</i>	135
9. Psychopathology and the social and historical construction of gay male identities <i>Gary Taylor</i>	154

10. Lesbian and gay affirmative psychotherapy: Defining the domain	175
<i>Martin Milton, Adrian Coyle and Charles Legg</i>	
11. Family therapy with lesbian and gay clients	198
<i>Maeve Malley and Damian McCann</i>	
12. 'I've always tolerated it but...': Heterosexual masculinity and the discursive reproduction of homophobia	219
<i>Brendan Gough</i>	
13. Student support for lesbian and gay human rights: Findings from a large-scale questionnaire study	239
<i>Sonja J. Ellis</i>	
14. Lesbian and gay awareness training: Challenging homophobia, liberalism and managing stereotypes	255
<i>Elizabeth Peel</i>	
<i>Index</i>	275

Introducing Lesbian and Gay Psychology

Celia Kitzinger and Adrian Coyle

Publication of this book marks the 'coming of age' of British lesbian and gay psychology. It celebrates the founding of the British Psychological Society's (BPS) Lesbian and Gay Psychology Section in 1998 after nine years of campaigning and three rejected proposals (two for a Psychology of Lesbianism Section and one for a Lesbian and Gay Psychology Section). The contributors to this book have generously agreed to donate all royalties to Section funds (as, of course, have the editors). As two of the campaigners who (with Martin Milton and Sue Wilkinson – who have also contributed to this book) ushered the successful proposal through the boards, committees and elections required to make the BPS Lesbian and Gay Psychology Section a reality, we are pleased and proud to have helped to create the conditions under which lesbian and gay psychology can flourish in a British context, as it has already blossomed in North America under the guidance of Division 44 (the Society for the Psychological Study of Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Issues) of the American Psychological Association. This book is part of a continuing contribution to the development of a vibrant, diverse and challenging lesbian and gay psychology in a European context.

The field of 'lesbian and gay psychology' initially emerged as a protest against the heterosexism of mainstream psychology. Until the mid-1970s, the vast majority of psychological research (both North American and European) presented homosexuality as a form of pathology, with lesbians and gay men characterized as the sick products of disturbed upbringings (Rosario, 1997). Psychology textbooks routinely presented material on lesbians and gay men under headings implying sickness (for example, 'sexual deviation' or 'sexual dysfunction') (Hall, 1985). The overwhelming majority of psychological research studies on the topic relied on samples drawn from prisons, mental hospitals and psychologists' consulting rooms – and most of these studies were conducted on gay male samples, with the findings generalized to 'include' lesbians (Morin, 1977; Morin and Rothblum, 1991). Techniques designed to convert gay men and lesbians into het-