

incident in Brooklyn a few years earlier, the character Leon asserts that "My psychiatrist told me I have a female soul trapped in a male body," and more recently even advertising has taken up the theme, as in a telephone company poster with a cartoon character declaring "I feel that I'm a 516 trapped in the body of a 212." So a doctrine of medieval Jewish mysticism has entered the folklore of the gay subculture, and thence passed into the mainstream of American popular culture as a metaphor for a profound state of alienation.

Warren Johansson

INCEST

Incest means sexual intercourse between closely related individuals, especially when they are related within degrees where marriage is prohibited by law or religious custom. Until recently the sexual abuse of sons by their fathers was considered rare, but in the later decades of the twentieth century a different picture emerged. Statistics drawn from child welfare agencies, hospitals, police reports, and general surveys indicate that considerable numbers of boys are involved in homosexual activity with their own fathers. David Finkelhor's analysis of data derived from 5,809 substantiated cases of child abuse reported by agencies in thirty-one states indicated that 57 percent of the 757 boys in the group were abused by their fathers. It is probable that the twin taboos attaching to homosexuality and incest result in the underreporting of such cases.

Problems of Interpretation. Clinical studies of father-son incest are few, and the reported case histories often lack sufficient data to develop descriptive models. Many cases significantly fail to describe the actual nature of the sexual contact, and the literature on incest equally fails to employ strict criteria. Is the mere touching of the child's genitalia a sexual act, or must the adult's contact with the child's body lead to sexual arousal and

then orgasm in one or both partners? The law often demands a more stringent definition of the act in order to justify conviction.

While sexual contact between fathers and daughters is now recognized as more frequent than most authorities had suspected, the line of demarcation between reality and fantasy remains difficult to draw. The same consideration applies to instances of alleged father-son incest. Several cases have been reported in which homosexual incest occurred in an apparently disorganized family situation where impulsive, physically abusive behavior by the father was the norm. These fathers sexually exploited their children, often both sons and daughters. The age of the son at the time of the initial sexual contact was usually prepubertal.

In one reported case a father with a record of convictions for manslaughter, bootlegging, and sale of pornography promoted sexual relations between the two oldest children and himself and his stepdaughter for pornographic ends. In another, the eldest son in a family of six children confided to his therapist the family secret that his father has sexually molested all six children over a period of ten years. When the father was in a violent temper, the oldest son or daughter would offer his or her sexual favors to protect the younger children from cruelty.

The father's alcoholism is an outstanding feature in some cases. Though often appearing homosexual in orientation, these fathers often do not so define themselves. One reported case describes sexual involvements between a father and his fourteen-year-old son that ranged from genital fondling to anal penetration. The father initiated the sexual activity, each time in a state of intoxication. Both father and son denied any previous homosexual encounters or desires.

Another set of cases in the literature describes the father as having some positive emotional investment in the son with whom he has sexual contact. Aggres-

sion does not accompany the sexual act. The fathers in some instances deny the homosexual character of the relationship, maintain that it was only an expression of love, and express the usual contempt for homosexual men as weak and effeminate.

On the other hand, there are also reported cases in which the son is gradually drawn into the homosexual life style of the father, at times after having independent homosexual experience on his own. A remarkable account of three generations of father-son incest in one family where this behavior seemed to be accepted centered upon a father who was a professor and theatre director. Another case involved an eighteen-year old who began his homosexual career six years earlier, welcomed his father's advances, and even described him as his "best lover."

The clinical picture of the father in cases of homosexual incest does not offer the profile of a "symbiotic" relationship between him and his son. In the cases that describe the triadic relationship between father, mother, and son, the father's incestuous behavior appears unrelated to the quality of his marital relationship. The sexual needs of the father in sexual contact with his son are less those which the wife cannot fulfill than those which he is afraid to express outside the home or with strangers.

Social Response. Public welfare agencies receive far fewer reports of homosexual than of heterosexual incest. This disparity reflects cultural factors such as the male ethic of self-reliance joined with the child's fear that if he reveals an incident his own independence and activities might be restricted. Because all studies indicate that most abuse of male children is by a partner of the same sex, a double stigma emerges in the violation of the taboo against homosexuality as well as of the prohibition of sexual contact between adults and children.

Follow-up studies of homosexual incest are rare. Studies of prostitutes of both sexes often elicit the assertion that

they had been physically and sexually abused in their childhood. A recent investigation has found that the predominance of psychopathology reported in cases of father-son incest was higher than in all other pairings with the exception of sister-sister incest. The association of father-son incest with serious psychopathology, however, appears to be the pattern in this type of liaison. During the period of victimization or shortly thereafter the son often displays behavior revealing serious emotional disorder.

The therapist dealing with father-son incest must allow his professional diagnosis and treatment to be guided by an understanding of interplay between the intrapsychic and environmental factors in the situation. The psychological history of the father is of paramount importance. Some fathers act on impulses that are pansexual, others are responding to homosexual urges. Non-judgmental professional assistance can enable males involved in homosexual incest to face their own sexual orientation and to manage in a socially less dysfunctional manner the erotic component of their interaction with other members of the family. Family therapy may also be needed to enable all members of the family to cope with the sequelae of the incestuous behavior. At the same time, it cannot be denied that some adults, even if they are heterosexual or bisexual, are not fit or desirable parents; they do not have the personality structures that make for successful parenthood. Marriage counseling that would dissuade such individuals from ever having offspring would better serve the interests of society than belated measures to repair harm already inflicted.

Cross-Cultural Parallels. The taboo on homosexual behavior promulgated by the **Abrahamic religions** has led researchers to overlook the fact that the primary core of prohibitions in Leviticus 18 included two that were specifically directed against sexual relations with one's father (18:7) and one's father's brother

(18:14), and Orthodox Judaism recognizes these as two distinct commandments of the traditional 613. If Leviticus 18:22 had already existed, these provisions would have been otiose. The story of Ham and Noah in Genesis 9:20–24 is a euphemistically worded account of father–son incest, of aggression by Ham, “the father of Canaan,” who “saw the nakedness of his father.” The narrator then deploys this primal violation of patriarchal morality—the first homosexual episode in the Bible—to justify the conquest and subjugation of the descendants of Ham by the invading Israelites; it is an erotic legend with a political tendency.

All human societies forbid incest, not for supposed biological reasons, but simply because the prohibition of sexual relations between kinsmen is part of the operational definition of the family. Family status includes both the right to have sexual intercourse with other members of the family and the rigorous denial of that right. The code of sexual morality in Leviticus 18 is a compact among the male members of the patriarchal family not to transgress one another’s sexual rights and prerogatives, a code which the primitive Church ratified and made part of its own constitution (Acts 15:20, 29). Thus homosexual aggression and incest have been culturally defined as perennial problems for the social order.

BIBLIOGRAPHY. Mark Williams, “Father–Son Incest: A Review and Analysis of Reported Incidents,” *Clinical Social Work Journal*, 16 (1988), 165–79.
Warren Johansson

INCIDENCE, FREQUENCY, AND THE KINSEY 0–6 SCALE

Soon after Alfred Kinsey began tabulating the sex data he was collecting in the 1940s it became obvious that several new modes of analyzing it would be

necessary, both for clarity and to avoid confusion. For instance, to show how easy and feasible homosexual contacts are for “the human animal” as Kinsey liked to say, it was necessary to determine their *incidence*—that is, how many people’s sex histories contained at least one such experience to the point of orgasm.

Likewise, an *accumulative incidence* figure was needed to indicate what percentage of the histories reflected at least one such homosexual experience by each age (a gradually rising curve since additional individuals each year either “come out” or try out such activity). These group data also made it possible to draw a curve that would accurately estimate how many subjects would eventually have at least one overt homosexual experience. As Kinsey put it (1948, p. 623), “at least 37% of the male population has some homosexual experience between the beginning of adolescence and old age. . . . This is more than one male in three of the persons that one may meet as he passes along a city street.”

But of course, a single experience does not a homosexual make (even though a sizable portion of lay observers has always been ready to assume so). Nor, in any case, does an incidence figure reflect when and how often homosexual experiences may be repeated—thus the need for some measure of *frequency*. Frequency figures were determined by ascertaining in each history how many and how often homosexual contacts (to the point of orgasm) were experienced by or before age fifteen, as well as during each five-year period thereafter, through age 55.

However, since homosexuality can exist as a psychological response (sometimes in the absence of any kind of overt activity of the kinds noted by incidence or frequency figures), Kinsey also devised his famous Heterosexual–Homosexual scale from 0 to 6: