

citizens equally. Larger firms can vary the stock of their capital by foreign means and are thus insulated from the Federal Reserve Board's actions. The average borrower has no such escape route.

Perhaps the best part of the book is the first of two chapters on the Reagan administration. Here Stein provides a lucid explanation and solid critique of supply-side economics. The upshot of this scholarly account is that Reagan nevertheless represents a good foundation for a conservative consensus.

As Stein himself admits, his monetary program calls for sacrifice. A stable economy requires many to be laid off, risk danger in unregulated worksites, and in short to forfeit a human standard of existence for the sake of free enterprise and the "national interest." At some times in our history this sacrifice was seen for what it was and not tolerated. Presently the time is right to promote it. And Stein has taken the opportunity to advance the image of a clean and innocuous national effort to achieve price stability forever. For those of us called on to do the sacrificing let us hope this image remains only within the lofty walls of the economics guild.

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Stephen O. Murray, Social Theory, Homosexual Realities,
New York: Gai Saber Monograph No. 3, 1984. 83 pp.
\$5.95 (paper).

A specter is haunting social science. It is the specter of homosexuality.

In those rare instances when sociologists researching homosexuality thought to apply fundamental theory to their process, they were strangely selective in the concepts and dictums they found appropriate to the subject. While many, for example, assumed even before they began that Durkheim's problematic and ambiguous notions of anomie and deviance would necessarily suit and be informed by the study of sexual variance. However, this well-worn research path has ended cluttered with confusion and mystification, a kind of sociological house of horrors filled with research atrocity stories. At the same time few Durkheimians evinced any need to apply to sexuality Durkheim's clear recommendation that the explanation of social phenomena should be sought first in social variables. As a result, psychologization of research has been extreme, and macrosocial theories about the social organization of Eros have become the province of anthropologists, literary scholars and historians. Similar in their inconsistency are some neo-Marxists who were at pains to decry the reification of the concept of "gay people," while hastening, sometimes in the same paragraph, to extol the development of group consciousness among racial minorities or women (but see Adam, 1978, for a sensitive comparative historical analysis). And of course the literature has tended to subsume lesbianism under male homosexuality.

The degree to which sociology has alternately ignored and distorted the study of "homosexual realities" has long been of concern to those, who, like Stephen Murray and this writer are, as he puts it, "biculturals" of both the gay and sociological worlds. Murray's monograph articulates this concern. The result is at once provocative, readable, critical, and exceptionally useful. It is especially so to those just now discovering that the sociological literature of

homosexual communities is, to ironically transpose the rhetoric of the lesbian and gay liberation movements, "everywhere."

Readers of Murray's book will at last be able to begin to locate themselves "somewhere" in the accumulating sea of gay sociology and sociohistory. Along with the monograph itself, which is discussed below, Murray presents an appendix and an outstanding list of references, much needed and useful tools in themselves. The appendix is a quick guide to research topics outside the main theoretical focus and represents a handy starting point for those initiating study or research in any of the 27 areas listed. Like the main essay, the appendix is acerbic and argumentative. In contrast, the list of references, containing hundreds of items, is quite catholic. Unlike most existing bibliographies of homosexuality, it is current, and consists almost entirely of citable sociological and anthropological literature.

Opening his discussion, Murray reviews the failures of grand theory to explain the late 20th century sociopolitical world order. He then begins a detailed critique of the main theoretical perspectives that have been applied at one time or another to, as a reviewer in the gay press put it, "real experience" by an "unnatural science" (O'Conner, 1985). Both functionalism and symbolic interactionism are called to account for their inconsistencies and active ignorance of empirical homosexual realities, but it is clear that Murray's main interest is in the newer research he classifies into two categories he titles "Sussex deconstructivists" and "stigma theory."

He both suspects and ridicules the Sussex School's implication that the reified gay/straight conceptual dichotomy is itself the cause of the oppression of polymorphous sexuality. "Imperfect fits", he observes, "are typical of classification schemata, abomination is not." A one-time student of Foucault, and apparently less than enchanted with the canonization process that has followed the master's death (see Murray, 1985), he is at pains to describe critically Foucault's dystopic, but not necessarily discontinuous view of history. Foucault's (1980) ambivalence toward his own articulation of the homosexual "species" as purely a construction of

discourse is also described. In a similar vein, Murray is not ready to accept the neo-Marxist assertion that the conflation of homosexual acts and actors is "a function of late capitalism," since neither the classification, persecution, nor systematic restriction of life chances of persons on the basis of typologies of sexuality is "unique to capitalist states."

Under the heading "stigma theory" he is supportive of Humphreys' (1972) exemplification of Goffman's (1963) "glimpsed...possibility of organizing to challenge the very stigma that is the only common feature of a group." Murray saves his ire for the cultural biases that have marred scholarship in the social history of the movement that has, since World War II, organized that challenge. His list includes the self-flattery of intellectuals (who overestimate the significance of the Kinsey report), New York provincialism, and the late 60's ahistoricism of the Stonewall generation of gay scholars, a Ganymede which often imagines itself Athena: sprung full-grown from the mind of the Mattachine Zeus.

In a chapter on "The Growth and Diversification of Gay Culture" his critique ranges loosely, as does the research itself, from the macrostructural (i.e., community, ghetto) to leather culture and the structure of camp. He rejects tolerance as a correlate of both the rise of gay ghettos and of gay urbanization itself, since in a tolerant urbanity gay ghettos would presumably arise and be nurtured outside of late night meat-packing districts and other empty ecological niches. And if, he points out, as is often assumed, such cultural modes as S&M, drag, or camp are the products of self-hatred, how do we explain "the opposite manifestations at different times?"

For sociologists his most enlightening chapter may be that called "Homosexual Categorization in Cross-Cultural Perspective," in which he summarizes the anthropological and sociohistorical studies which have been accumulating rapidly in recent years. Here Murray offers us the beginnings of a Weberian typology of the ideal types of male homosexual social organization across both cultural and historical contexts.

This short edition is marred by numerous typographical errors of the "1928" for "1982" sort, but if past experience with the Gai Saber series is any

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indication, those interested would do well not to wait for a reissue.

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