

SUICIDE OF THE SEXES
PLAYBOY'S USE OF PSYCHIATRY THROUGH GAY LIBERATION

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines how *Playboy's* use of psychiatry to justify their sexual liberation ideology impacted the publication's construction of masculinity and homosexuality, while exploring the larger question: can gay liberation exist without feminism? By analyzing *Playboy's* early use of Freudian psychiatry and Alfred Kinsey's sexology in the 1950s and early 1960s, later engagement with the anti-psychiatry movement in the late 1960s and early 1970s, and finally, conversations on homophobic theories of psychiatry of men like Charles Socarides and Irving Bieber during the gay liberation movement, it becomes apparent that *Playboy's* use of sexually liberal psychiatry, while seemingly accessible to gay men in its formation of masculinity predicated on willingness to denigrate femininity and desire to have unconstrained sex, was not wholehearted. In the same issues and even individual texts that promote homophilic psychiatry, *Playboy* pitted women and gay men against each other, using both homophilic and homophobic psychiatry to argue for their ability to leer at and have sex with women.

“The movement women. . . go on to argue that sexual relations will be most gratifying if the conventional roles of the two sexes are not closely observed. . .and they give the impression that ineffable pinnacles of pleasure can be reached if couples are just overthrown, and oral and anal access affirmed. . . these attitudes are also convenient for homosexuals, who have long since abandoned sexually determined roles and escaped from the genital tyranny of the missionary position. . . it would be a great mistake, however, to identify this fashionable concept of sex chiefly with feminism and gay liberation. . . ironically enough, it is also the essential ideology of male chauvinism: the playboy philosophy. Although the chauvinists may secretly nurse visions of male dominance, they are delighted with the prospect of female liberation.”¹

- George Gilder’s “Suicide of the Sexes: Are feminism, gay liberation, and the playboy philosophy really all the same?” published in *Harper’s Magazine* in July 1973

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¹ George Gilder, “Suicide of the Sexes: Are feminism, gay liberation, and the playboy philosophy really all the same?” *Harper’s Magazine*, July 1973, 52.

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INTRODUCTION THE VAULT NEXT TO HERS

*I will be laid to rest in a vault next to hers. It has a completion notion to it. I will be spending the rest of my eternity with Marilyn.*²

- Hugh Hefner

In December 1953, Hugh Hefner exploited America's lust for famous sex symbol Marilyn Monroe in his first issue of *Playboy*, in which he published nude photos of the movie star as his very first "Sweetheart of the Month." Monroe did not pose for these pictures; they came from a nude calendar photoshoot from before she famous.³ Hefner located the original photographer and bought the stills for just \$500.⁴ The publication of Monroe's nudes instantly catapulted *Playboy* to fame. By 1962, nine years after that first issue, Monroe maintained special stature in *Playboy's* world as their inaugural naked lady, and in an eerie moment of déjà vu, Hefner again purchased nude photo stills from her last unfinished movie, *Something's Got to Give*, for publication in a special *Playboy* photo spread.

The publication of the naked pictures was put on hold when Monroe killed herself in August of 1962.⁵ In February 1963, a letter to the editor acknowledged the potential creepiness of publishing pornographic images of a dead woman, but still voted for their inclusion in an upcoming eulogy.

May I simply say that I am quite sure you would not be guilty of necrophilia or bad taste

²"Hugh Hefner Talks About His Memories of Marilyn Monroe," *CBS Los Angeles*, August 3, 2012, accessed April 21, 2017, <http://losangeles.cbslocal.com/2012/08/03/hugh-hefner-talks-about-his-memories-of-marilyn-monroe/2/>.

³Gloria Steinem, *Marilyn* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1986), 97.

⁴Gloria Steinem, *Marilyn* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1986), 97.

⁵J. Randy Taraborrelli, *The Secret Life of Marilyn Monroe* (New York: Grand Central Publishing, 2009), 470.

if you did publish these photographs.⁶

Playboy responds to the request for posthumous publication of Monroe's pictures with the following, encouraging the reader to wait a while for the necrophilic distaste to subside:

Following her suicide, the picture story was canceled, because we felt a serious abridgment of taste would be involved if we ran it so soon after her death; *Playboy* has never knowingly dealt in anything it considered shoddy or sensational. With the passage of time, however, we feel that the problem cases, and we plan on including these exclusive pictures as part of a special tribute to Marilyn scheduled for later this year.⁷

When the photo spread was finally printed, it was placed next to a eulogy that acknowledged Monroe's depression, and its root cause as the objectification *Playboy* perpetuated.⁸ *Playboy* even notes, oblivious to their culpability in her death, that Monroe cancelled her *Playboy* photoshoot for a special accompanying cover photo before killing herself three days later.

Thursday of the week before the shooting, Editor-Publisher Hefner received a personal call from her private secretary informing him without explanation that Marilyn had changed her mind about the cover. The Sunday she was found dead in her Brentwood home.⁹

Yet, the magazine failed to take credit for their role in her sadness and subsequent suicide, instead saying that,

⁶ "Dear Playboy," *Playboy*, February 1963, 11.

⁷ "Dear Playboy," *Playboy*, February 1963, 11.

⁸ *Playboy* recognizes that Marilyn was upset by her role, noting that after the *Seven Year Itch*, she was, "increasingly impatient with what she felt was her typecast public image as a vapid and voluptuous kewpie doll." "MM Remembered," *Playboy*, January 1964, 106; They even quote her dissatisfaction as a sex symbol. *Playboy* even quotes Marilyn that she didn't want to be remembered for her figure: "I don't want to play sex roles anymore. I'm tired of being known as the girl with the shape." "MM Remembered," *Playboy*, January 1964, 192. They also explicitly address her psychological illness, mentioning the "insomnia and psychosomatic illness" that preceded her death, as well as "several hospitalizations for nervous disorders." "MM Remembered," *Playboy*, January 1964, 190.

⁹ "MM Remembered," *Playboy*, January 1964, 190.

Marilyn's memory, as we see it, is best served by recalling her not as she was when she died but when she lived. For she wished to be remembered by the last memento she left behind,¹⁰

and

16 months have softened the memory of the tragedy, and we are proud to present the photos now, in fitting commemoration of the 10 years of publication which Marilyn inaugurated as our first Playmate, as part of this fond tribute to her enduring beauty.¹¹

Decades later, Hefner went on to purchase the burial vault next to Marilyn's. Of his invasive purchase, he says,

I will be laid to rest in a vault next to hers. It has a completion notion to it. I will be spending the rest of my eternity with Marilyn.¹²

“The Woman Who Died Too Soon”

Ten years after Monroe's suicide, Gloria Steinem, long time foil to Hefner in the narrative of sexual liberation since the publication of her 1963 “A Bunny's Tale,” wrote and published a 1972 *Ms.* Magazine article commemorating the tenth anniversary of Monroe's death. Entitled “The Woman Who Died Too Soon,” Steinem lays blame for Monroe's death on society's valuation of Marilyn's sexuality and incompetence of her Freudian analysts, wondering if she would have survived if she came to fame just a decade later during the anti-Freudian women's liberation movement:

Might our new confidence in women's existence with or without the approval of men have helped a thirty-six-year old woman of talent to stand on her own? . . . To stop depending on sexual attractiveness as the only proof that she was alive- and therefore to

¹⁰“MM Remembered,” *Playboy*, January 1964, 190.

¹¹“MM Remembered,” *Playboy*, January 1964, 190.

¹²“Hugh Hefner Talks About His Memories of Marilyn Monroe,” *CBS Los Angeles*, August 3, 2012, accessed April 21, 2017, <http://losangeles.cbslocal.com/2012/08/03/hugh-hefner-talks-about-his-memories-of-marilyn-monroe/2/>.

face aging with confidence? . . . Could she have challenged the Freudian analysts to whom she turned in her suffering?¹³

In Steinem's later 1986 book expansion of article, *Marilyn*, she implicates both Monroe's Freudian psychiatrist Ralph Greenson and *Playboy* as responsible for the actresses' death.¹⁴

Unlike *Playboy*, who maintained that the sexy star would have wanted the magazine to publish her final nude photographs, Steinem and the feminists of the women's liberation movement would fault Monroe's Freudian psychiatrists, addictions to overprescribed painkillers, and the *Playboy* supported patriarchy that sexualized her with her suicide. For Gloria Steinem, Monroe was a feminist tragedy, a symbol of the destructive forces of objectification and the insanity that follows.

“Kissing an Icon”

As Steinem was recreating Monroe's legacy as a struggle against patriarchal psychiatry and sexualized objectification, another group was co-opting her image as a symbol of struggle as well: the gay community. Though less recognized than other straight, female icons of male gay culture, Monroe's persona has been remembered and honored through drag performances, most

¹³Originally published in *Ms. Magazine*, August 1972, republished in Gloria Steinem, *Outrageous Acts and Everyday Rebellions* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1983), 255-261.

¹⁴On Marilyn Monroe's potential role in a movie about Freud: “Dr. Ralph Greenson, a well-known Freudian who was Marilyn's analyst in the last months of her life, advised against it, because, he said, Freud's daughter did not approve of the film. Otherwise, Marilyn would have been called upon to enact the psychotic fate she feared most in real life, and to play the patient of a man whose belief in female passivity may have been part of the reason she was helped so little by psychiatry.” Gloria Steinem, *Marilyn* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1986), 101-102; On Hefner's role in her objectification: “Marilyn was paid fifty dollars for the nude calendar shots she did under another name, but just one was bought for five hundred dollars once she was an actress and had been identified as the model. The purchaser was an unknown editor named Hugh Hefner, and that nude greatly increased the appeal of the first issue of *Playboy*. (A year after her death, nude photos take on the set of *Something's Got to Give*, her last and unfinished film would increase *Playboy's* sales again.” Gloria Steinem, *Marilyn* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1986), 97.

notably Jimmy James' impersonation.¹⁵ By 2016, an exhibit at the Stonewall museum called "Kissing An Icon" had solidified her importance in gay history. According to chief curator Charles L. Ross,

I really think it's because she was vulnerable and talked about her life. She talked about how she struggled and that made her different. Gay people felt different and misunderstood.¹⁶

While Steinem made Monroe an icon for second wave women for her listless, depressed femininity, and *Playboy* quietly literally profited from her sexual objectification, the male gay community combined the two, commemorating her beauty in drag and her finding comradeship in her sadness.

The perfect female body, so adored by *Playboy*'s readers, revered in imitation yet mourned by gay men, yet later reincarnated as a symbol for female depression. How did these groups all claim Monroe for their own yet develop to be so ideologically different? As an integral voice in conversations about what it meant to be a man at midcentury, how did *Playboy* engage with questions of gender, depression, suicide, and sex?

To paraphrase Foucault in his *History of Sexuality*, in which he locates the influence of psychiatry as an institutional tool for controlling sexual norms: The central issue, then (at least in the first instance), is not to determine whether *Playboy* says yes or no to sex (they do), whether *Playboy* formulates prohibitions or permissions (they don't), whether *Playboy* asserts its importance or denies its effects, or whether *Playboy* refines the words one uses to designate it; but to account for the fact that *Playboy* speaks about sex, to discover who in *Playboy* does the

¹⁵oneandmanyjimmyjames, "JIMMY JAMES as MARILYN MONROE on Phil Donahue (5/87)," accessed April 22, 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aHV86hBdFT0>.

¹⁶Johnny Diaz, "Stonewall Exhibit Focuses on Marilyn Monroe as Gay Icon," *South Florida*, July 8, 2016, accessed April 17, 2017, <http://www.southflorida.com/gay-lesbian/fl-marilyn-monroe-exhibit-stonewall-20160707-story.html>.

speaking, the positions and viewpoints from which *Playboy* speaks, the institutions which prompt *Playboy* to speak about it and which store and distribute the things that are said. What is at use, briefly, is the over-all “discursive fact,” the way in which *Playboy* puts sex “into discourse.”¹⁷ The question that has guided this project has been, thus, not WHY *Playboy* discusses psychiatry the way they do, as that answer is as obvious as the pornography they publish. Rather, HOW do those discussions, and the beliefs of the men having them, support or subvert sexual liberation and gender expectations?

In this thesis, I argue that *Playboy* engaged with psychiatry in a way that, while seemingly beneficial for gay liberation, was only truly liberating for heterosexual men.

Through an early reliance on the theories of Freud and Kinsey to justify their sexual liberation, to later engagement with the anti-psychiatry movement, to final discussions on psychiatry through discourses on homosexuality, *Playboy* uses the power of psychiatry to create new sexual norms that benefited the sexually liberated, masculine man while simultaneously objectifying women, emphasizing her femininity, and ignoring both her existential and everyday problems. In both their affirmations of psychiatry and even in their escape from it, *Playboy* exhibited true interest in only one thing: letting heterosexual men do whatever they wanted.

¹⁷ Original quotation: “The central issue, then (at least in the first instance), is not to determine whether one says yes or no to sex, whether one formulates prohibitions or permissions, whether one asserts its importance or denies its effects, or whether one refines the words one uses to designate it; but to account for the fact that it is spoken about, to discover who does the speaking, the positions and viewpoints from which they speak, the institutions which prompt people to speak about it and which store and distribute the things that are said. What is at use, briefly, is the over-all “discursive fact,” the way in which sex is “put into discourse.”” Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality* (New York: Random House, 1978), 11.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Political Utility of Psychiatry

Several philosophers and feminist theorists have written on the political utility of psychiatry as a tool of oppression. These scholars criticize both psychiatry and psychoanalysis as institutions and, specifically, Freud, as convenient for justifying oppression based in sex and gender. In his *Madness and Civilization*, Michel Foucault developed his philosophy on the relativity of “madness” and the political control the malleable definition of insanity provides.¹⁸ Later, he refined these ideas in *History of Sexuality*, arguing that psychiatry has been used as a repressive source of power to regulate sexuality, enabling a removal of the sexually abnormal to asylums and brothels. Foucault even criticizes the sexually liberal “progress” of Freudian psychoanalysis and sexology, writing the following:

Thus, one denounces Freud’s conformism, the normalizing functions of psychoanalysis. . . and all the effects of integration ensured by the “science” of sex and the barely equivocal practices of sexology.¹⁹

While Foucault does not explicitly address issues of gender, his work to rewrite the histories of social norms by positioning psychiatry as oppressive and harmful mirrors that of feminist and queer theorists, who hoped to do the same.²⁰ In 1969, almost a decade before the publication of *History of Sexuality*, radical feminist Kate Millett argued that Freud, whom she noted was especially important in America, deserved responsibility for midcentury oppression of women in

¹⁸Michel Foucault, *Madness and Civilization* (New York: Random House, 1965).

¹⁹Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality* (New York: Random House, 1978), 5.

²⁰Jeffery Weeks, “Remembering Foucault,” *Journal Of The History Of Sexuality* 14, no. 1/2 (January 2005): 191, accessed April 24, 2017, <http://web.a.ebscohost.com.proxy.library.georgetown.edu/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=3&sid=f1079a9f-c6dc-4263-8c8d-0820ecc8cb6b%40sessionmgr4008&hid=4109>.

the United States in her seminal *Sexual Politics*.²¹ Providing academic basis for women's long felt antagonism towards psychiatry, Millet provides rationalization for America's regression into family sex roles at midcentury:

A number of new prophets arrived on the scene to clothe the old doctrine of the separate spheres in the fashionable language of science. The most influential of these was Sigmund Freud.²²

Also like Foucault, Millet mentions that Freud has been misremembered as a sexual liberator:

Although generally accepted as a prototype of the liberal urge toward sexual freedom, and a signal contributor toward softening traditional puritanical inhibitions upon sexuality, the effect of Freud's work, that of his followers, and still more that of his popularizers was to rationalize the invidious relationship between the sexes, to ratify traditional roles, and to validate temperamental differences.²³

This antagonism towards Freud seeped from ivory towers into popular culture and popular movements as well. Valerie Solanas' 1967 *SCUM Manifesto*, for example, a satirical feminist repudiation of Freud, includes brash statements such as, "women . . . don't have penis envy; men have pussy envy."²⁴ In the 1970s, popular feminist leader Gloria Steinem published, "If Freud Were Phyllis," in which she reimagines Freud's sexist theories as if they had been written by a woman about men.²⁵ And, during the early aughts of the gay liberation movement, activists like Frank Kameny were equally critical of psychiatry, helping to end its political influence against gayness, eventually succeeding in removing homosexuality from the DSM III.²⁶

²¹Kate Millett, *Sexual Politics* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1970), 178.

²²Kate Millett, *Sexual Politics* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1970), 178.

²³Kate Millet, *Sexual Politics* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1970), 178.

²⁴Valerie Solanas, *SCUM Manifesto* (Oakland, CA: AK Press, 2013), 26.

²⁵Gloria Steinem, *Moving Beyond Words* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994), 19-90.

²⁶Franklin Kameny, "How It All Started," *Journal Of Gay & Lesbian Mental Health* 13, no. 2 (March 2009): 80, accessed April 21, 2017,

***Playboy* Pornography, Sexual Liberation, and Feminism**

In addition to, and sometimes in concert with, repudiations of Freud, prominent feminist theorists have argued that *Playboy* and pornography in general are anti-woman by distinguishing between sexual liberation and feminism. In her examination of *Playboy* as a pornographic text in her 1982 “More Than Simply a Magazine”: *Playboy’s Money*,” Catharine MacKinnon explains how a too-narrow focus on sexual liberation as a standard of female freedom has led some, “liberal so-called feminists and the pornographers wind up on the same side of things.”²⁷ Like Millet and Foucault, MacKinnon also criticizes Freud, attributing the philosophical underpinnings for *Playboy’s* objectifying sexual liberation to the psychoanalyst:

Men have eroticized the idea that their sexuality has been denied, but their sexuality has been nothing but expressed and expressed and expressed. Sexual liberation, from this perspective, looks like a male rationalization for forcing sex on women. Intellectually, it derives from Freud.”²⁸

Anti-pornography feminists continued MacKinnon’s work, arguing that *Playboy’s* brand of sexual liberation and feminism are not the same. At times, these authors directly reference *Playboy’s* wrongful equation between sexual liberation and sexual objectification. In her 1990 defense of anti-porn feminists, for example, Dorchen Leidholt writes that Hugh Hefner is not

<http://web.b.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=389fe788-b99c-4b1b-bfce-7579621d0dac%40sessionmgr120&vid=1&hid=116>.

²⁷Catherine A. MacKinnon, ““More Than Simply a Magazine”: *Playboy’s Money*,” in *Feminism Unmodified* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1987), 145.

²⁸ Catherine A. MacKinnon, ““More Than Simply a Magazine”: *Playboy’s Money*,” in *Feminism Unmodified* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1987), 144.

feminist but “sexual liberationist.”²⁹ In Evelina Giobbe’s “Confronting the Liberal Lies about Prostitution,” published in 1990, she states that,

women’s attempts to free themselves of the double standard was frustrated by the liberal left’s adoption and promotion of the “Playboy Philosophy.” This resulted in the replacement of the double standard by a single male standard in which sexual liberation became synonymous with male sexual objectification of and unconditional access to women.³⁰

Other feminist theorists expanded on this differentiation between sexual liberation and feminism to explore how sexual liberation without feminism might negatively affect homosexual men.

While an alliance between gay liberationists and feminists may seem intuitive- they both fight against oppression based in sex roles, after all- historically, pro-pornography gay liberationists have sometimes found more in common with straight men than anti-porn feminists.³¹ Gay activist John Stoltenberg explains the alliance between straight male pornographers and gay sexual liberationists through the example of *Playboy*:

I don’t think anyone needs convincing that the gay community, taken as a whole, tends to view its naked political self-interest as lying somewhere in bed with the likes of . . . Hugh. . . Hefner. . .³²

²⁹ Dorchen Leidholdt, “When Women Defend Pornography” in *The Sexual Liberals and the Attack on Feminism*, ed. Dorchen Leidholdt and Janice G. Raymond (New York: Teachers College Press, 1990), 126.

³⁰ Evelina Giobbe, “Confronting Liberal Lies About Prostitution” in *The Sexual Liberals and the Attack on Feminism*, ed. Dorchen Leidholdt and Janice G. Raymond (New York: Teachers College Press, 1990), 76.

³¹For an easy to understand introduction to this historical dissonance, see John Stoltenberg, “You Can’t Fight Homophobia and Protect the Pornographers at the Same Time- An Analysis of What Went Wrong in Hardwick,” in *The Sexual Liberals and the Attack on Feminism* ed. Dorchen Leidholdt and Janice G. Raymond (New York: Teachers College Press, 1990), 187.

³²John Stoltenberg, “You Can’t Fight Homophobia and Protect the Pornographers at the Same Time- An Analysis of What Went Wrong in Hardwick,” in *The Sexual Liberals and the Attack on Feminism* ed. Dorchen Leidholdt and Janice G. Raymond (New York: Teachers College Press, 1990), 187.

Recently, feminists have acknowledged this dissonance between pro-porn gay liberationists and anti-porn feminists and tried to reconcile it, hoping to form an alliance between gay men and women. In “Pornography/Death: The Problem of Gay Pornography in a Straight Supremacist System,” Shannon Gilreath continues the work of leading anti-pornography movement theorist Andrea Dworkin, attempting to marry the oppressions of women and gay people in a criticism of pornography as oppressive. She states:

Pornography’s most vociferous defenders, in my experience, are Gay men; the only men who seem to think pornography is more important than liberal male lawyers of the ACLU variety are Gay men. Put simply, gay men love their pornography.³³

Gilbreath criticizes the gay liberation movement’s acceptance and defense of pornography as beneficial to sexual liberation, arguing instead for unification between the two movements.³⁴

***Playboy* Scholarship**

While *Playboy* has been a popular text among cultural historians and feminist academics, no scholar has examined how *Playboy*’s political use of psychiatry included or excluded gay men from the magazine’s definition of sexually liberal masculinity.

In *The Hearts of Men: American Dreams and the Flight from Commitment*, a foundational history for *Playboy* scholarship, author Barbara Ehrenreich explains how a post-war culture of psychiatry formed the male-centered culture from which *Playboy* emerged. Ehrenreich argues that the *Playboy* endorsed sexual liberation was formed as a “flight from commitment” in response to 1950s psychologies that claimed any deviance from heterosexual, monogamous breadwinning for men, and heterosexual, monogamous motherhood for women was a

³³Shannon Gilreath, *The End of Straight Supremacy: Realizing Gay Liberation* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 170.

³⁴Shannon Gilreath, *The End of Straight Supremacy: Realizing Gay Liberation* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 169-203.

pathological, sometimes even unpatriotic deviance from healthy sexual maturity.³⁵ Moreover, at midcentury, the theories of R.J. Havinghurst and Manfred Khun linked failure to marry to homosexuality, using homophobia to pressure men into marriage.³⁶ According Ehrenreich, *Playboy* used its centerfolds, so obviously heterosexual, to avoid the psychiatric charge of homosexuality so often launched at bachelors:

Playboy was immune to the standard charges leveled against male deviants. . . it was impervious to the ultimate sanction of homosexuality. The Playboy didn't avoid marriage because he was a little bit "queer," but, on the contrary, because he was so ebulliently, even compulsively heterosexual.³⁷

However, while Ehrenreich places *Playboy* in its larger psychosocial context, including midcentury psychiatric views on homosexuality, she does not examine *Playboy*'s engagement with psychiatry itself.

In her *Playboy and the Making of the Good Life in Modern America*, Elizabeth Fraterrigo presents a similar view to Ehrenreich's, arguing that Hefner used 1950s Lavender Scare homophobia in order to establish his magazine as a promotion of healthy, all-American male heterosexuality, despite its promiscuity, during a time when similarities between bachelors and homosexual men were being considered.³⁸ The centerfolds were not indecent in this context, but proof that the *Playboy* reader was a patriotic heterosexual.

In *Bachelors and Bunnies*, Carrie Pitzulo argues that while *Playboy*'s obvious priority was heterosexual sexual liberation, *Playboy* accepted, if not promoted, homosexuality as

³⁵Barbara Ehrenreich, *Hearts of Men* (Garden City, NY: Anchor Press, 1983), 15.

³⁶Barbara Ehrenreich, *Hearts of Men* (Garden City, NY: Anchor Press, 1983), 18, 20.

³⁷Barbara Ehrenreich, *Hearts of Men* (Garden City, NY: Anchor Press, 1983), 50.

³⁸Elizabeth Fraterrigo, *Playboy and the Making of the Good Life in Modern America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 40-41.

“necessary to Hefner’s overall vision of sexual freedom.”³⁹ Pitzulo offers ample evidence for Hefner’s liberality towards gay men, such as, “Playboy Philosophies,” grateful letters from homosexual readers, including anti-DSM gay activist Frank Kameny, and Hefner’s well-documented belief in Alfred Kinsey’s work.⁴⁰ Pitzulo emphasizes that, while *Playboy* was imperfect, gay Americans were so marginalized until the early 1970s that support from a such a popular magazine should be considered progressive and inclusive.⁴¹ However, while Pitzulo’s work is certainly well researched, her analysis of homosexuality in *Playboy* fails to move beyond an observation of *Playboy*’s lukewarm acceptance towards gay men. She establishes that *Playboy*’s work with homosexuality was “sympathetic, not celebratory,” but avoids questioning whether their ambivalent validation of homophobic psychiatry should be seen as problematic or counterintuitive to their progressive self-image.⁴²

In this project, I contribute to the work of Ehrenreich, Fraterrigo, and Pitzulo, building on Ehrenreich’s work placing *Playboy* in its psychological context, Fraterrigo’s contention that *Playboy* used homophobia to make the objectification of women socially acceptable, and Pitzulo’s work establishing the magazine as a sexually progressive voice for homosexuality.

METHODOLOGY

For this project, I analyze *Playboy*’s direct engagement with psychiatric theories and developments. Specifically, I examine early *Playboy* texts that have been treated as foundational to the magazine’s ethos of sex, as well as non-fiction articles and letters discussing developments

³⁹Carrie Pitzulo, *Bachelors and Bunnies* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 109.

⁴⁰Carrie Pitzulo, *Bachelors and Bunnies* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 108-117.

⁴¹Carrie Pitzulo, *Bachelors and Bunnies* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 116.

⁴²Carrie Pitzulo, *Bachelors and Bunnies* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 116.

in the field of psychiatry. This includes *Playboy*'s first issue, famous texts on gender and sex from author Philip Wylie, three examples of Hefner's "Playboy Philosophy," non-fiction reports on developments in anti-psychiatry, and several letters to the magazine published in "The Playboy Forum."

The issues of *Playboy* I analyze- from its inception in 1953 until 1972- come from years pertinent to the gay liberation movement's fight against psychiatry. Psychologies condemning homosexuality were codified in the first DSM in 1952, just one year before *Playboy*'s first year of publication, and would remain until the second edition was published in early 1973.⁴³ These were landmark years for the gay liberation movement; while gay liberation had been percolating as social and political dissent since at least the early 1960s, scholars trace their genesis as cohesive movements to the end of the decade, citing Gay Liberation's Stonewall Riots in 1969 as a landmark event.⁴⁴

Moreover, although *Playboy* challenged and affirmed the sexual status quo through several channels of power other than psychiatry, for purposes of brevity and clarity of analysis, this project only focuses how they manipulated psychiatry. This thesis could be expanded to be more than twice its length if *Playboy*'s discussions of homosexuality in relation to politics, law, and economics were included. For example, when criticized for not being more outwardly accepting of homosexual people, *Playboy* often reminded readers of their "neutrality" towards homosexuality informed by their belief in individual rights, especially of privacy, not psychiatric reasons.⁴⁵ However, examining *Playboy*'s attitudes towards sexual liberation psychiatry provides

⁴³ Dennis Altman, *The Homosexualization of America* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1983), 5.

⁴⁴ Stephen Maddison, *Fags, Hags, and Queer Sisters* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000), 1.

⁴⁵ For examples of *Playboy*'s individual rights responses to criticism that they were not progressive towards homosexuality, see: Editorial response to letter written by William B. Russell,

a unique litmus test to see just how homophobic the magazine was- while acceptance of anything is easy under the vague ideologies of individual rights or libertarian politics, the contradicting attitudes towards homosexuality within midcentury psychiatry provided opportunities for *Playboy* to either actively embrace or reject homosexuality as a part of their sexually liberated manhood. By examining psychiatry specifically, it becomes obvious that *Playboy*'s claim as a sexual liberation text inclusive of homosexuality is not entirely true; they perpetuated damning homophobic theories when those theories could help the magazine objectify women. Calling playboys sexual liberationists, therefore, is much too generous. Their mission was exactly what feminists have always recognized: to have more sex, and lots of it, with women.

CHAPTER REVIEW

In Chapter I, "What do Playboys Want?: Hugh Hefner Gets in Bed with Freud and Kinsey," I analyze *Playboy*'s early use of the psychiatric theories of Sigmund Freud and Alfred Kinsey in both their founding sexist tracts against women as well as in Hefner's "Playboy Philosophy," which argues for the sexual liberation of all men. Specifically, I examine their veneration of Kinsey in their first issue; Philip Wylie's Freudian denigration of femininity in his famous "Womanization of America" and "The Abdicating Male"; and three illustrative examples of Hefner's willingness to both support and exploit homosexuality with psychiatry in his "Playboy Philosophy." While *Playboy*'s use of Freud and Kinsey supports homosexuality in the abstract, their use of psychiatry to objectify women and demean femininity remains their primary goal, and Hefner still uses psychiatric homophobia to argue for female objectification.

In Chapter II, "The Brothel and the Mental Hospital: Affirming Gender with Anti-Psychiatry," I analyze how *Playboy* used the anti-psychiatry movement of the late 1960s to

"Sexual Tolerance" in "The Playboy Forum," *Playboy*, July 1965, 45; Editorial response to "Homosexual Rights" in "The Playboy Forum," *Playboy*, January 1966, 64.

rationalize all expressions male sexuality, examining three articles reporting on developments in anti-psychiatry as well as examples of letters in “The Playboy Forum” from both heterosexual and homosexual men. In these texts, *Playboy* presents a new conception of masculinity justified by the anti-psychiatry movement and grounded in mores of sexual freedom, misogyny, and the language of war. *Playboy*’s new conception of masculinity as warlike, sexually prolific, and disgusted by femininity indicates an opportunity for the inclusion of gay men, who, when they fulfilled these characteristics of masculinity codified by anti-psychiatry, were given both respect and opportunities to have their voices included in *Playboy*’s writing on manhood.

Finally, in Chapter III, “Male Gays, Male Gaze: Conversations on Homophobic Psychiatry,” I analyze *Playboy*’s engagement with explicitly homophobic psychiatry, revealing that their seeming willingness to allow gay men into their misogynistic brand of anti-psychiatry manhood was untenable. So long as *Playboy*’s empire was built on the theories of psychiatrists and the bodies of nude women, gay men could find no true acceptance in their pages.

I
WHAT DO PLAYBOYS WANT?
Hugh Hefner Gets in Bed with Freud and Kinsey

*Kinsey points out the error in thinking of the homosexual and the heterosexual as two distinct types; there are only individuals, who respond to various kinds of sexual stimulation in various ways.*⁴⁶

- Hugh Hefner, "The Playboy Philosophy," September 1964

*About the only effective way to discourage homosexuality at that crucial age. . . would be to 'encourage heterosexuality.' That simple statement has significant implications for all of our social and legal restrictions on sex, including censorship. . . nothing but a healthier emphasis on the heterosexual will ever reduce the homosexual element in society.*⁴⁷

- Hugh Hefner, "The Playboy Philosophy," September 1964

From *Playboy's* first issue in December 1953, to the early and foundational discussions of gender from famed misogynist Philip Wylie, through the explanation of *Playboy's* ethos in Hugh Hefner's famous "Playboy Philosophy," first published for the magazine's 9th anniversary in December 1962, *Playboy* used both Freud and Kinsey in their campaign for sexual liberation, embracing psychiatry as a source of power and authority to justify both the indiscriminate sexual liberation of men and the objectification of women that came along with it.⁴⁸ In the process, *Playboy* implicitly and sometimes explicitly uses the psychiatric authority of Freud and Kinsey to condone gay sex, developing a conception of manhood predicated more on a healthy sex drive and disgust at feminine weakness than heterosexuality. However, with the objectification of women as their primary goal, these early issues of *Playboy* still embraced psychiatric homophobia, even as they promoted the pro-homosexual, anti-woman theories of Freud and Kinsey.

⁴⁶Hugh M. Hefner, "The Playboy Philosophy," *Playboy*, September 1964, 165.

⁴⁷Hugh M. Hefner, "The Playboy Philosophy," *Playboy*, September 1964, 166.

⁴⁸Hugh M. Hefner, "The Playboy Philosophy," *Playboy*, December 1962, 73-74, 166-170, 196.

Freud, Kinsey, and Sexology

In the early 1950s, when Hefner first conceived of his magazine, psychiatry was enjoying its height of political and social import in America. As medical historian John Burnham explains, from the 1940s to 1960s, Freudian psychiatry was so influential in America that, “it was difficult to separate the core psychoanalytic movement from the pervasive cultural impact.”⁴⁹ Largely undiscussed at this time, however, was a letter from Freud that would later become an often cited defense of homosexuality. Sent to an American mother worried her son was homosexual, Freud said the following:

Homosexuality is assuredly no advantage, but it is nothing to be ashamed of, no vice, no degradation, it cannot be classified as an illness, we consider it to be a variation of the sexual function produced by a certain arrest of sexual development.⁵⁰

Historians of homosexuality in America would later credit this fabled letter with aiding the gay liberation movement in its fight against homophobic psychiatry. In *The Gay and Lesbian Liberation Movement*, Margaret Cruikshank states that America’s blind belief in Freudian psychology actually ended up being beneficial to the gay liberation movement.⁵¹ In *Queer Theory: An Introduction*, Annamarie Jagose includes Freud along with Jacques Lacan and Michel Foucault as important 20th century figures in re-imagining of the self and identity, important concepts for gay liberation.⁵² With the father of psychoanalysis on their side, gay

⁴⁹John Burnham, ed. *After Freud Left* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), 4.

⁵⁰Sigmund Freud quoted in Henry Abelove, *Deep Gossip* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), 1.

⁵¹Margaret Cruikshank, *The Gay and Lesbian Liberation Movement* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 7.

⁵²Annamarie Rustom Jagose, *Queer Theory: An Introduction* (New York: Melbourne University Press, 1996), 78.

activists used this letter to gain at least a modicum of authority in a profession that disregarded them as ill.

In addition to Freud's popular credibility, a new social science was gaining in popularity and acceptance as it repudiated previously canonical homophobic psychiatric findings: sexology. Like psychiatry, sexology developed as a discipline in 19th century Europe, but enjoyed exceptional popularity in American in the mid-20th century, and, obvious given its name, was mainly interested in sex.⁵³ Among these midcentury sexologists, Alfred Kinsey was the most famous, groundbreaking, and influential in reimagining American sexual behavior.⁵⁴ In 1948, Kinsey published his seminal *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male*, and in 1953, its less popular female counterpart, *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female*.⁵⁵ In both of these texts, Kinsey surveyed human sexual behavior to conclude that Americans engaged in taboo sex acts much more frequently than previously thought, with a shocking prevalence of homosexuality.

She and Dr. Kinsey

In foundational texts on sex and gender, Hugh Hefner and *Playboy* authors utilized the popular pro-sex psychiatric theories of Freud and Kinsey to simultaneously liberate male sexuality, objectify women, and denigrate femininity. For example, in the short 43 pages of

⁵³Vern L. Bullough, "Sex Will Never Be the Same: The Contributions of Alfred C. Kinsey," *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, Vol. 33, No. 3 (June 2004): 277-286, accessed April 23, 2017, <http://web.b.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=f0d48094-4013-4cdd-bb0e-4a2ce0832032%40sessionmgr104&vid=4&hid=116>.

⁵⁴Vern L. Bullough, "Sex Will Never Be the Same: The Contributions of Alfred C. Kinsey," *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, Vol. 33, No. 3 (June 2004): 277, accessed April 23, 2017, <http://web.b.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=f0d48094-4013-4cdd-bb0e-4a2ce0832032%40sessionmgr104&vid=4&hid=116>.

⁵⁵Vern L. Bullough, "Sex Will Never Be the Same: The Contributions of Alfred C. Kinsey," *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, Vol. 33, No. 3 (June 2004): 277, accessed April 23, 2017, <http://web.b.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=f0d48094-4013-4cdd-bb0e-4a2ce0832032%40sessionmgr104&vid=4&hid=116>.

Playboy's inaugural December 1953 issue, Alfred Kinsey appeared no less than three times, with a prominent, though overlooked, position as someone worthy of reverence and importance to *Playboy*'s credo. In addition to his appearance in a cartoon, Kinsey cameoed in two of the most infamously foundational *Playboy* texts: the introductory letter and Marilyn Monroe's centerfold.⁵⁶ In the introductory letter, Kinsey appears in the last line of a treatise that, though unsigned, would become infamous among academics as evidence for *Playboy*'s conception of their own masculinity.⁵⁷ In self-congratulatory language, the note ends:

We believe, too, that we are filling a publishing need only slightly less important than the one just taken care of by the Kinsey Report.⁵⁸

Thus, on the first page *Playboy* ever published, the magazine was beginning to establish its significance as a text on par with famed psychiatrists and sexologists, perpetuating the authority of Kinsey and codifying their own through him.

In addition to their introduction with Kinsey, the text accompanying Marilyn Monroe's mythical, now realized, centerfold, after pondering her measurements and her "sensual appeal," reads that Monroe, "and Dr. Kinsey have so monopolized sex this year, some people in high places are investigating to make certain no anti-trust laws have been bent or broken."⁵⁹ The odd couple of Monroe and Kinsey reveals, for the first time, how *Playboy* imagined sexual liberation to mean freeing men of legal and moral expectations of celibate decency while further objectifying women. When the reader turns the page from the Monroe-Kinsey comparison, he is

⁵⁶ For cartoon, see: "Vip on Sex," *Playboy*, December 1953, 20-21.

⁵⁷ For further analysis of this introductory letter, see the following: Barbara Ehrenreich, *The Hearts of Men* (Garden City, NY: Anchor Press, 1983), 43-44; Carrie Pitzulo, *Bachelors and Bunnies* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 19-21.

⁵⁸"Volume I, Number I," *Playboy*, December 1953, 3.

⁵⁹*Playboy*, December 1953, 17.

greeted with nude Monroe, legs tucked and leaning back, breasts exposed, sitting atop a red satin backdrop. Is she sexually liberated, or is she trapped on page 19? Whichever it is, *Playboy* and Kinsey were just beginning a conspiratorial relationship to keep her there.

Freudian Philip Wylie

Later, *Playboy* explicitly codified their sexist use of sexual liberation psychiatry, moving beyond those tenuous mentions of Kinsey to an explicit use of Freud in two famous foundational texts on gender, both written by Philip Wylie: “The Abdicating Male” and “The Womanization of America.”⁶⁰ Philip Wylie’s work, cited by several *Playboy* scholars as examples of the sexism that was foundational to *Playboy*’s emerging construct of masculinity, exhibits a unique aspect left unnoted by other scholars: it was grounded in Freud.⁶¹ Just as his 1943 manifesto *Generation of Vipers* used Freud to attack femininity as weak, in his work for *Playboy*, Wylie uses contemporary psychiatric theory to justify his rampant sexism. In Wylie’s 1956 “The Abdicating Male,” he uses Freudian psychiatry to explain why the “gray flannelled men” of the office felt so stifled by their secure, breadwinning lifestyles. According to Wylie, it was desire for sex, driven by “Freudian libido,” that led successful professional men to feel discontented and restless.⁶² Freud was right: American men needed sex, and lots of it. In September 1958’s “Womanization of America,” Wylie again cites Freud in his analysis of sex roles in the 1950s,

⁶⁰Philip Wylie, “The Abdicating Male,” *Playboy*, November 1956, 23-24, 50, 79; Philip Wylie, “The Womanization of America,” *Playboy*, September 1958, 51-52, 77-79.

⁶¹ For more on Philip Wylie’s writing about housewives in the forties and fifties, both in *Playboy* and in his 1943 *Generation of Vipers*, see Barbara Ehrenreich, *The Hearts of Men* (Garden City: Anchor Press, 1983), 37-38; Carrie Pitzulo, *Bachelors and Bunnies* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2011), 29-33; and Elizabeth Fratterigo, *Playboy and the Making of the Good Life in Modern America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 29.

⁶²Philip Wylie, “The Abdicating Male,” *Playboy*, November 1956, 23.

using the great “sage” Freud’s assertion that men were “aggressive in sex matters” and “women passive.”⁶³ Wylie’s use of Freud codifies an important piece of *Playboy*’s misogynistic sexual liberation formula: that femininity means weakness.

“The Playboy Philosophy”

While neither the December 1953 issue nor Wylie’s articles explicitly mention homosexuality, the unwavering belief in both Freud and Kinsey, used to leer at Marilyn, advocate for more heterosexual sex, and degrade womanhood, would have only been helpful for a gender conforming, masculine focused gay liberation movement. *Playboy*’s early validation of Freud in the Philip Wylie texts, as well as the publication’s inaugural establishment of Kinseyan authority, would re-manifest as explicitly objectifying, homosexual-supporting power sources in Hefner’s “Playboy Philosophy.” First published in December 1962, on the 9th anniversary of Monroe’s first centerfold publication, the editor describes the “Playboy Philosophy” as a place where he, “spells out- for friends and critics alike- our guiding principles and editorial credo.”⁶⁴

⁶³ Philip Wylie, “The Womanization of America” *Playboy*, September 1958, 79.

⁶⁴Hugh M. Hefner, “The Playboy Philosophy,” *Playboy*, December 1962, 73.

For a full list of citations for the 25 articles in the “The Playboy Philosophy” series, in order from first to last, see the following: Hugh M. Hefner, “The Playboy Philosophy,” *Playboy*, December 1962, 73-74, 166-170, 196.; Hugh M. Hefner, “The Playboy Philosophy,” *Playboy*, January 1963, 41-42, 44, 47-52.; Hugh M. Hefner, “The Playboy Philosophy,” *Playboy*, February 1963, 43-48.; Hugh M. Hefner, “The Playboy Philosophy,” *Playboy*, March 1963, 55-56, 58, 60, 125.; Hugh M. Hefner, “The Playboy Philosophy,” *Playboy*, April 1963, 63, 65-68, 130.; Hugh M. Hefner, “The Playboy Philosophy,” *Playboy*, May 1963, 65-66, 68-72, 168-169.; Hugh M. Hefner, “The Playboy Philosophy,” *Playboy*, June 1963, 69, 71-78, 176-177.; Hugh M. Hefner, “The Playboy Philosophy,” *Playboy*, July 1963, 45, 47-50, 113-114, 116-117.; Hugh M. Hefner, “The Playboy Philosophy,” *Playboy*, August 1963, 43-46, 138-143.; Hugh M. Hefner, “The Playboy Philosophy,” *Playboy*, September 1963, 81-82, 84, 86, 88-90, 230, 232, 234-235.; Hugh M. Hefner, “The Playboy Philosophy,” *Playboy*, October 1963, 81-82, 84, 86, 88, 90-92, 236.; Hugh M. Hefner, “The Playboy Philosophy,” *Playboy*, November 1963, 49-50, 52, 54-59, 62-66, 68, 70-74, 148-150.; Hugh M. Hefner, “The Playboy Philosophy,” *Playboy*, December 1963, 67-68, 70, 72-74, 76, 78, 80, 82, 214-215.; Hugh M. Hefner, “The Playboy Philosophy,” *Playboy*, January 1964, 61-64, 66, 188-189.; Hugh M. Hefner, “The Playboy Philosophy,” *Playboy*, February 1964, 45-47, 143-148.; Hugh M. Hefner, “The Playboy Philosophy,” *Playboy*, April 1964, 63-64, 66, 68, 176-182, 184.; Hugh M. Hefner, “The Playboy Philosophy,” *Playboy*, July 1964, 29-30, 32-34, 36-39, 111-115.; Hugh M.

In these editorials, using his most explicit references to Freud and Kinsey to date, Hefner uses the psychiatrists to overcome religious, legal, and even fellow psychiatric institutions of sexual repression, molding an ethos that appears to support both heterosexual and homosexual sexual liberation. However, closer analysis of these texts reveals that *Playboy* used Freud and Kinsey only as they were convenient for the objectification of women and demeaning of femininity, just as they had been in their initial use by the magazine in 1953 and by Wylie. While *Playboy*'s embrace of Freud and Kinsey did promote pro-gay theories of sex, in these "Playboy Philosophies," Hefner simultaneously used vague, homophobic psychiatric theories to conveniently justify female objectification. Thus, despite *Playboy*'s sometimes explicit use of Freud and Kinsey as homophobic, the magazine's primary concern was always enabling more female pornography, and Hefner was willing to use anti-gay psychiatric theories to do so.

8th Playboy Philosophy: July 1963⁶⁵

For example, in Hugh Hefner's 8th "Playboy Philosophy," published in July 1963, Hefner calls both *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male* and *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female*, "indisputable scientific evidence," using psychiatry's own self-perception as an unbiased, infallible science to instantly repudiate any contrarian viewpoints.⁶⁶ Over and over

Hefner, "The Playboy Philosophy," *Playboy*, September 1964, 71-74, 161-168.; Hugh M. Hefner, "The Playboy Philosophy," *Playboy*, December 1964, 91-94, 212-218.; Hugh M. Hefner, "The Playboy Philosophy," *Playboy*, January 1965, 53-54, 56-58, 60-62, 186-187.; Hugh M. Hefner, "The Playboy Philosophy," *Playboy*, February 1965, 41-44, 46-48, 138-139.; Hugh M. Hefner, "The Playboy Philosophy," *Playboy*, May 1965, 63-66, 141-142, 144-148.; Hugh M. Hefner, "The Playboy Philosophy," *Playboy*, November 1965, 69-70, 72, 159-160.; Hugh M. Hefner, "The Playboy Philosophy," *Playboy*, December 1965, 83-87, 220-225.; Hugh M. Hefner, "The Playboy Philosophy," *Playboy*, May 1966, 69-72, 159-160.

⁶⁵Hugh M. Hefner, "The Playboy Philosophy," *Playboy*, July 1963, 45, 47-48, 50, 113-114, 116-117.

⁶⁶Hugh M. Hefner, "The Playboy Philosophy," *Playboy*, July 1963, 47.

again, Hefner affirms psychiatry, stating that, “in the face of such a tide of reason and research from psychologists, psychotherapists, mental-health experts” one would have to be, ironically, absolutely insane to deny that humans were more sexually “deviant” than previously believed.⁶⁷

Again:

To deny the true emotional and physical significance of sex in society is to turn our backs on all the knowledge about man that the sociological and psychological sciences have given us.⁶⁸

Hefner uses this scientific authority to overcome prudish, anti-sex therapists. After an examination of anti-sex writings from psychologist James E. Bender and famed counselor Ann Landers leads Hefner to conclude, “Is it any wonder America has spawned generations that are frigid, impotent and sexually maladjusted?” Hefner cites Kinsey’s work in *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female* as a pro-sex counter to these fellow therapists.⁶⁹

While Hefner’s manifesto unsurprisingly focuses on the social acceptance of expressed heterosexual sex, he also includes Kinsey’s work on homosexuality, mentioning that after the sexologist published *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male*, “ordinary people, on buses, in offices, and over cocktails, were discussing frequency of. . . homosexual activity.”⁷⁰ In his list of Kinsey’s shocking statistics, Hefner includes that, “50 percent had had some homosexual conduct.”⁷¹ With pages and pages repeating Kinsey’s research that humans are sexually stimulated by a variety of things, human and non-human, and his famous statistics on human

⁶⁷Hugh M. Hefner, “The Playboy Philosophy,” *Playboy*, July 1963, 50.

⁶⁸Hugh M. Hefner, “The Playboy Philosophy,” *Playboy*, July 1963, 45.

⁶⁹Hugh M. Hefner, “The Playboy Philosophy,” *Playboy*, July 1963, 113.

⁷⁰Hugh M. Hefner, “The Playboy Philosophy,” *Playboy*, July 1963, 47.

⁷¹Hugh M. Hefner, “The Playboy Philosophy,” *Playboy*, July 1963, 48.

sexual activity, Hefner uses Kinsey's research to conclude that the socially acceptable scope of human sexuality has been far too limited.⁷²

However, despite his use of the cultural prescience of Kinsey's psychiatry to justify his otherwise crude mission for unconstrained fucking, including gay sex, Hefner still uses vaguely psychiatric homophobia when it behooves his main mission: more heterosexual with women. For example, in advocating for a *Playboy* in every household, Hefner says:

If a normal child is denied sexual stimulation by beautiful images he will be stimulated by ugly images; if a child is not stimulated by heterosexual sources, he will be stimulated by homosexual ones.⁷³

Hefner's willingness to simultaneously promote Freud and Kinsey and these vague, behaviorist theories reveals *Playboy's* true, and only, motive: more pictures of naked women. While *Playboy* gives a platform to the homophilic Freud and Kinsey, their inclusion of the idea that looking at more pictures of nude women promotes heterosexuality was both damning for homosexual people and indicative of Hefner's deft ability to manipulate contradictory psychiatric theories to justify his pornography.

16th Playboy Philosophy: April 1964⁷⁴

Hefner's toggling between explicit psychiatric endorsements of sodomy and using homophobia to sell his magazine persists in the 16th "Philosophy," published almost a full year later in April 1964. Hefner uses Kinsey to normalize sodomy:

⁷²Hefner includes the following list: "nonsexual stimuli as taking a shower, punishment, fast elevator rides, skiing, sitting in church, boxing and wrestling, swimming, anger, being late to school, seeing a policeman, being alone at night, looking over edge of building, big fires, marching soldiers, seeing name in print, running away from home, fear of a big boy, long flights of stairs, motion of a car or bus, receiving a report card and hearing the national anthem." Hugh M. Hefner, "The Playboy Philosophy," *Playboy*, July 1963, 45.

⁷³Hugh M. Hefner, "The Playboy Philosophy," *Playboy*, July 1963, 47.

⁷⁴Hugh M. Hefner, "The Playboy Philosophy," *Playboy*, April 1964, 63-66, 68, 176-184.

the psychiatrist . . . would consider almost all of this activity normal (and, therefore, “natural”); and Kinsey found a far greater frequency for most of it than was previously assumed.⁷⁵

Hefner even uses Kinsey to explicitly defend, “homosexual sodomy,” quoting the sexologist in the following sympathetic statement:

Actually, we Americans are- as a nation- more intolerant of homosexuality than almost any other country in the world; Dr. Alfred Kinsey states, in *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female*: “There appears to be no other major culture in the world in which public opinion and the statute law so severely penalize homosexual relationships as they do in the United States today.” You can call an American male a scoundrel and a thief with less chance of eliciting an emotional response than if you simply question his manhood.⁷⁶

However, immediately after this, Hefner states that homosexuality can be cured with psychiatry:

To whatever extent homosexuality- an erotic attraction to members of the opposite sex- represents an emotional disorder, it must be dealt with psychiatrically.⁷⁷

Hefner also cites the vague knowledge of a “contemporary psychiatrist” to argue that his nude photographs of women will promote a “healthy” heterosexuality:

Never mind that the contemporary psychiatrist knows. . . that books, and pictures, and pamphlets and papers that deal openly and honestly with sex have little or no effect upon human behavior and whatever effect they do have is healthful, rather than injurious, to society; never mind that the science of psychiatry has revealed that it is the repression of the natural sex instinct, and the association of sex with guilt and shame, that cause the hurt to humankind- producing frigidity, impotence, masochism, sadism, homosexuality and all manner of other sexual perversions, social and psychological ills, neuroses and psychoses.⁷⁸

As in his 8th “Philosophy,” in his 16th, Hefner simultaneously uses Kinsey to explicitly support homosexuality while using homophobic psychiatric theories to advocate for the sale of his

⁷⁵Hugh M. Hefner, “The Playboy Philosophy,” *Playboy*, April 1964, 66.

⁷⁶Hugh M. Hefner, “The Playboy Philosophy,” *Playboy*, April 1964, 177.

⁷⁷Hugh M. Hefner, “The Playboy Philosophy,” *Playboy*, April 1964, 177.

⁷⁸Hugh M. Hefner, “The Playboy Philosophy,” *Playboy*, April 1964, 64.

magazines and nude pictures of women for all to see, using psychiatric authority to claim Americans needed Playmates to avoid gayness themselves.

18th Playboy Philosophy: September 1964⁷⁹

In September 1964's "Playboy Philosophy," Hugh Hefner continues this complicated mish mash of contradictory sexual liberation psychiatry, this time using both Freud and Kinsey to overcome anti-sex laws while, again, using psychiatric homophobia to normalize his naked images. In this 18th "Philosophy," Hefner explicitly states that homosexuality should be accepted. He quotes Kinsey's *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female*, as well as Kinsey's famous statistics on American intercourse, which include homosexuality:

Eighty-five percent of the total male population has premarital intercourse, 59 percent has some experience in mouth-genital contacts, nearly 70 percent has relations with prostitutes, something between 30 and 45 percent has extramarital intercourse, 37 percent has some homosexual experience [and] 17 percent of the farm boys have animal intercourse. All of these, and still other types of sexual behavior, are illicit activities, each performance of which is punishable as crime under the law. The persons involved in these activities, taken as a whole, constitute more than 95 percent of the total male population.⁸⁰

Hefner also includes a lovely sentiment from Kinsey on the individuality of humanity, stating that homosexual individuals should not be defined by their sexuality alone.

Neither did Kinsey, who was certainly no Freudian; he concluded that homosexual conduct was simply too widespread, in our society and others, to be considered a sickness. Kinsey points out the error in thinking of the homosexual and the heterosexual as two distinct types; there are only individuals, who respond to various kinds of sexual stimulation in various ways.⁸¹

In addition to the always homophilic Kinsey, Hefner includes Freud, citing the Austrian's acceptance of homosexuality by referencing the now famous letter to the American mother- that

⁷⁹Hugh M. Hefner, "The Playboy Philosophy," *Playboy*, September 1964, 71-74, 161-168.

⁸⁰Hugh M. Hefner, "The Playboy Philosophy," *Playboy*, September 1964, 71, 168.

⁸¹Hugh M. Hefner, "The Playboy Philosophy," *Playboy*, September 1964, 165.

same letter that has been remembered by historians of gay liberation as a helpful bit of homophilic psychiatry in a largely antagonistic field.

Freud did not believe that homosexuals were necessarily neurotic; in a letter to the mother of a homosexual, who had asked him for help, he wrote, "Homosexuality is assuredly no advantage, but it is nothing to be ashamed of--no vice, no degradation, it cannot be classified as an illness."⁸²

Alas, despite Hefner's paragraphs and paragraphs of psychiatry presenting the normalcy of homosexuality through Freud and Kinsey, Hefner later cites the homophobic Dr. Paul Gebhard of the Institute for Sex Research, whom he notes, "succeeded Dr. Kinsey as director of the Institute for Sex Research on the latter's death."⁸³ Hefner writes:

About the only effective way to discourage homosexuality at that crucial age, Dr. Gerbhard believes, would be to 'encourage heterosexuality.' That simple statement has significant implications for all of our social and legal restrictions on sex, including censorship . . . nothing but a healthier emphasis on the heterosexual will ever reduce the homosexual element in society.⁸⁴

Again, Hefner is almost homophilic himself, but his desire to sell magazines filled with pictures of naked women outweighs any true commitment to Freud, Kinsey, or even male sexual liberation. Hefner's inclusion of Freud and Kinsey in these "Playboy Philosophies," all friendly to homosexuality at times, thus does not equal a wholehearted endorsement of gayness. While Hefner's use of Freud and Kinsey both helped establish a cultural clout for the two psychiatrists that would later become important for the gay liberation movement, and, at times, explicitly endorsed sodomy, the editor-in-chief also used psychiatrically codified homophobia in order to justify his main mission: selling magazines filled with images of naked women.

⁸²Hugh M. Hefner, "The Playboy Philosophy," *Playboy*, September 1964, 165.

⁸³ Hugh M. Hefner, "The Playboy Philosophy," *Playboy*, September 1964, 72.

⁸⁴Hugh M. Hefner, "The Playboy Philosophy," *Playboy*, September 1964, 166.

These same writings that praised Kinsey for his statistics on American's prolific homosexual sex lives were also used to make the sale of the female body socially acceptable. As Hefner manipulated Freud and Kinsey to mock femininity and normalize more prolific sex, he also perpetuated psychiatry that insinuated homosexuality could be cured with pornography. By using the homophobic psychiatric belief that repressed heterosexual expression becomes homosexuality in order to lend his public leering of nude women psychiatric credibility, Hefner made an unintended choice to intertwine the fates of gay men and the anti-pornography feminists. Ironically, especially given Hefner's self-perception as a sexual liberator, in his treatment of psychiatry as fact, he becomes the sexual oppressor of both homosexual men and all women.

II THE BROTHEL AND THE MENTAL HOSPITAL⁸⁵

*I don't feel unmasculine; I deplore femininity entirely. . . I don't have long hair or wear faggy clothing. . . I like being a homosexual and will continue to be one. Many people reading this letter will probably say I have some kind of mental problem and should see psychiatrist. But it happens that I don't want treatment; I want to be left alone.*⁸⁶

- Anonymous, *Playboy*, July 1971

*Murder is understandable: People kill for money or in a moment of wild rage or because their commanding officer has ordered them to--or because, like Charles Whitman or Richard Speck, they are patently insane. But who can explain why. . . Sylvia Plath, one of the best poets of our time, be obsessed with death to the point of writing about little else and attempting suicide twice--the second time successfully? The death of an attractive, successful, relatively young person mocks the everyday concerns of the rest of us.*⁸⁷

- Sam Blum, "Suicide," *Playboy*, November 1972

With his back against the cliff, Phil was stuck. He could fall forwards, plummet down to the bottom of the canyon, where his squished and shattered body would serve as an apt monument to a life of failure and fragility; or he could fall backwards into the arms of the prostitute who loved him. Sex with a whore or death by cowardice- which way should he escape?

Earlier that evening, Phil, the fictional narrator of a 1956 *Playboy* fiction piece, "I Am Committing Suicide," had drunkenly decided that he would kill himself.⁸⁸ A failure at life and

⁸⁵ Title borrowed from quotation from Michel Foucault's *History of Sexuality*: "If it was truly necessary to make room for illegitimate sexualities, it was reasoned, let them take their infernal mischief elsewhere: to a place where they could be reintegrated, if not in the circuits of production, at least in those of profit. The brothel and the mental hospital would be those places of tolerance: the prostitute, the client, and the pimp, together with the psychiatrist and the hysteric- those "other Victorians," as Steven Marcus would say- seem to have surreptitiously transferred the pleasures that are unspoken into the order of things that are counted." From Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality* (New York: Random House, 1978), 4.

⁸⁶"Let Me Be" in "The Playboy Forum," *Playboy*, July 1971, 52.

⁸⁷Sam Blum, "Suicide," *Playboy*, November 1972, 149.

⁸⁸Delmus A. Abbott, "I Am Committing Suicide," *Playboy*, March 1956, 59, 65-67.

capitalism, Phil feels that his fear of dying is apt justification for his death. While drinking at a bar alone, he thinks to himself, “a guy who has to get drunk to have enough guts to commit suicide ought to commit suicide.”⁸⁹ Also according to Phil, the people he knew thought he was “crazy.”⁹⁰ However, Phil was too pathetic, too much of a failure to even succeed at death. On his way to jump off Geronimo’s Mesa, he falls in a gully, overflowing from a torrid rainfall. Phil almost drowns before being saved by Rita Garcia, a prostitute he has been sleeping with. Even Rita thinks his almost accidental death is lame, and tells him so:

Phil, you're a fool. What on earth are you trying to do? I thought you were going to jump off Geronimo's Mesa, not drown yourself in this gully.⁹¹

After saving Phil, Rita, who is desperately in love with him, reveals her reason for following him out to the cliffs. She wants to prove her love for him by dying with him in a double suicide, and, with cheesy infantile romanticism, has decided they should kill themselves together by jumping off of a cliff called Lover’s Leap instead. Her reasoning is tinged with jealousy of his other lovers and neurotic desperation for male affection:

I'm going to do it hand in hand with you like the Indian lovers did. Cynthia Mowery would never do that with you. Her nor any of the other wives you've been in bed with.⁹²

Phil’s almost drowning and Rita’s presence have a sobering effect on our almost dead hero, and he realizes that he does not wish to die, especially not with this whorish stalker. However, Phil feels he must kill himself to save face, because he, “cannot let a prostitute have more guts than I

⁸⁹Delmus A. Abbott, “I Am Committing Suicide,” *Playboy*, March 1956, 59, 65-67.

⁹⁰Delmus A. Abbott, “I Am Committing Suicide,” *Playboy*, March 1956, 65.

⁹¹Delmus A. Abbott, “I Am Committing Suicide,” *Playboy*, March 1956, 66.

⁹²Delmus A. Abbott, “I Am Committing Suicide,” *Playboy*, March 1956, 66.

have.”⁹³ He ponders how to get out of this embarrassing predicament, and decides that seduction is his best bet. Instead of killing themselves, Phil and Rita have sex on cliffs, the rock “like a bed.”⁹⁴

In this *Playboy* view of suicide, Phil’s dramatic urge for death is understandable; it is an escape from the social pressures of manhood, only to be foiled by a literal whore, whose yearning for death, unlike Phil’s, was not reasonable, but a stupid and irrational cry for male attention. Ironically, although the author dismisses Rita as an insane slut, Phil only escapes death by emasculation through sex with her; he needs her body to affirm his masculinity, even as he demeans her wish to die as the irrational wish of a prostitute.

Phil’s story ended on page 67 in 1956, but was only a precursor to *Playboy*’s later gendering of suicide and insanity during the anti-psychiatry movement. During the late 1960s, as the psychiatric profession was abandoning the Freudian theories that *Playboy* was founded on, the magazine discussed theories of men like Thomas Szasz, Judd Marmor, Erving Goffman, and even used general tirades against psychiatry to continue their psychiatric justification for sexual liberation, granting Phil’s desirous disgust for Rita Garcia psychiatric authority. *Playboy* used these popular anti-psychiatry theories to liberate all male sexual behavior, objectifying and denigrating femininity while using the masculine language of war to reimagine sexually liberated manhood as courageous. The misogyny and warlike, libertarian masculinity that resulted offered a non-heterosexual definition of manhood that *Playboy* extended to gay men, as evidenced by anti-psychiatry letters written by homosexual male readers, published in *Playboy*, that rivaled their heterosexual cohorts in both misogyny and veneration of war.

⁹³Delmus A. Abbott, “I Am Committing Suicide,” *Playboy*, March 1956, 66.

⁹⁴Delmus A. Abbott, “I Am Committing Suicide,” *Playboy*, March 1956, 67.

The Anti-Psychiatry Movement

By the late 1960s, the landscape of popular psychiatry had changed dramatically since *Playboy*'s founding. Anti-psychiatrists were rebelling against the Freudian culture of psychology and contemporary sexology that had informed *Playboy*'s "Playboy Philosophy," and new movements dedicated to freeing individuals from sexual social norms developed and embraced theories that made previous "pathologies" seem normal. Within the psychiatric profession, psychiatrists like Erving Goffman, Thomas Szasz and Judd Marmor were outspoken about the social influence of psychiatry.⁹⁵ In *The Myth of Mental Illness*, published in 1960, Szasz attacked mental hospitals as tools of institutional oppression and coercion, advocating instead for radical freedom and personal responsibility.⁹⁶ In *Asylums*, published a year later in 1961, Erving Goffman presented another repudiation of psychiatric institutions.⁹⁷ These psychiatrists continued their work through the 1960s, when they were joined by gay advocate Judd Marmor, who used anti-psychiatry to argue that the problems of homosexual people were social, not biological or psychological.⁹⁸

⁹⁵Adrian Furnham, "The Anti-Psychiatry Movement," *Psychology Today*, May 7, 2015, accessed April 17, 2017, <https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/sideways-view/201505/the-anti-psychiatry-movement>.

⁹⁶Adrian Furnham, "The Anti-Psychiatry Movement," *Psychology Today*, May 7, 2015, accessed April 17, 2017, <https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/sideways-view/201505/the-anti-psychiatry-movement>.

⁹⁷Adrian Furnham, "The Anti-Psychiatry Movement," *Psychology Today*, May 7, 2015, accessed April 17, 2017, <https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/sideways-view/201505/the-anti-psychiatry-movement>.

⁹⁸Jack Drescher, "Judd Marmor, Psychiatry and Homosexuality," *Journal Of Gay & Lesbian Psychotherapy* 10, no. 2 (April 2006): 118-119, accessed March 21, 2017, <http://web.a.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=6&sid=257fe7c8-9fd7-4b09-9696-ab1727831174%40sessionmgr4007&hid=4212>.

“Crisis in Psychoanalysis”⁹⁹

In *Playboy*'s early engagement with these anti-psychiatry theorists, the publication tried to maintain their Freudian legacy, discussing new theories while still insisting that older psychiatric theories were valid. Never quite able to give up their early psychiatric foundations, in, “Crisis in Psychoanalysis,” Morton Hunt writes on the growing popularity of the anti-psychiatry movement but insists Freud should still be studied seriously.

Hunt quotes Szasz, Marmor, and many more, including one psychiatrist who states that psychoanalysis is “based on blind Freudian faith engendered on the couch rather than by any proven scientific fact.”¹⁰⁰ However, despite writing an article reporting on a movement that claimed psychoanalysis was dead, and his inclusion of ample evidence that it might very well be, Hunt concludes that Freud will persist:

If psychoanalysis can do this, it is not just therapy but education, not just education but philosophy; and not just philosophy but a cure, after all--a cure for what someone has glumly termed "this long and cruel malady called life." If so, psychoanalysis will surely survive its present crisis and seeming decline. Until a better philosophy appears, it will continue to be sought by the special few who have the perception, the intelligence and the motivation to see it through.¹⁰¹

Three years after the publication of “Crisis in Psychoanalysis,” *Playboy* acknowledged that the cultural capital of their favorite psychiatrist was waning, and, while they never fully repudiated their philosophical founder, began discussing anti-psychiatry in earnest, reimagining their psychiatric authority through the anti-psychiatry movement. In many ways, the anti-psychiatry theories of Szasz, Goffman, and their ilk were a natural fit. In *Hearts of Men*, Ehrenreich

⁹⁹Morton Hunt, “Crisis in Psychoanalysis,” *Playboy*, October 1969, 107-108, 116, 174-176, 178, 180.

¹⁰⁰Morton Hunt, “Crisis in Psychoanalysis,” *Playboy*, October 1969, 107.

¹⁰¹Morton Hunt, “Crisis in Psychoanalysis,” *Playboy*, October 1969, 180.

acknowledges that the individualistic ideology of *Playboy*'s original 1953 "flight from commitment" would be established within psychiatry a decade later with theories "in the company of R.D. Laing," famous anti-psychiatrist.¹⁰² In two reports on anti-psychiatry theories and letters against psychiatric institutions, *Playboy* uses anti-psychiatry to recodify masculinity as a prolific sex drive, aggressive misogyny, and manhood described through the language of war, abandoning the prescriptive nature of Kinsey and Freud for a more libertarian conception of the human mind. In addition to anti-psychiatry letters and articles on masculine desire for heterosexual sex, *Playboy* published letters from gay men expressing the same antagonism towards psychiatry and femininity as their straight peers. Like heterosexual men, the homosexual men *Playboy* published use anti-psychiatry to write manhood as misogynistic and warlike, and in *Playboy*'s publication of them, the magazine firmly establishes that their misogynistic, sexually liberal, anti-psychiatry ethos of masculinity was open to including gay men.

"Memoirs of an Intermittent Madman"¹⁰³

In "Memoirs of an Intermittent Madman," a report on newly popular anti-psychiatry theories told through the personal experiences of author Carlton Brown, Brown uses anti-psychiatry ideas to fault his wife for his insanity while simultaneously affirming his masculinity through references to American war, conceiving of masculinity as sexually liberated fear of women and comparisons of oneself to a soldier.

Brown first utilizes theories of anti-psychiatry to blame his wife, marriage, and lack of sexual fulfillment for his wrongful entrapment in both a mental hospital and his marriage. Brown

¹⁰²Barbara Ehrenreich, *Hearts of Men* (Garden City, NY: Anchor Press, 1983), 93.

¹⁰³Carlton Brown, "Memoirs of an Intermittent Madman," *Playboy*, June 1972, 171-172, 174, 176, 178, 180, 182.

suspects his wife of collusion with psychologists to keep him trapped in their sexless, sad marriage. He states:

Not long after I had told my second wife of my determination to separate from her and start divorce proceedings, I was carried away, very much against my will.¹⁰⁴

Despite what he describes as his wife's "strenuous protests" to keep him in the asylum, he was discharged only ten days after she had him committed.¹⁰⁵ After his release from the mental hospital, he separated from her for about eight months. As soon as he initiated divorce proceedings through his lawyer again, however, his wife once again "blew the whistle" on him in order to keep him trapped in his unhappy marriage.¹⁰⁶ According to Brown, he had been living in constant fear of his wife's abusive power, as she expressed her apprehensions of him "with such suspicion and hostility that I feared that she would have me put away again."¹⁰⁷ However, once in the care of doctors, it became apparent she had been exaggerating to keep him married to her- at the hospital, physicians told him that he was even more stable than he had been during the previous time his wife had initiated his commitment.

In addition to his wife's literal entrapment of him in mental hospitals, Brown writes that his sexually restrictive marriage worsened his psychiatric state. After his second child was born in 1950, his wife, who was suffering "extraordinary difficulties in her relations with our three-year-old son" refused to have sex with him.¹⁰⁸ According to him, she "wouldn't respond to my

¹⁰⁴Carlton Brown, "Memoirs of an Intermittent Madman," *Playboy*, June 1972, 182.

¹⁰⁵Carlton Brown, "Memoirs of an Intermittent Madman," *Playboy*, June 1972, 182.

¹⁰⁶Carlton Brown, "Memoirs of an Intermittent Madman," *Playboy*, June 1972, 182.

¹⁰⁷Carlton Brown, "Memoirs of an Intermittent Madman," *Playboy*, June 1972, 178.

¹⁰⁸Carlton Brown, "Memoirs of an Intermittent Madman," *Playboy*, June 1972, 172.

most gentle and prolonged lovemaking,” forcing him into an affair, which was then cited by psychiatrists as a symptom of his madness.¹⁰⁹ Fights with his wife preceded his other five mental breakdowns:

There was more anxiety; disagreements with my wife over our steadily worsening financial situation, our children and our increasingly marked sexual and emotional differences. They combined to precipitate five more "psychotic episodes" over the ensuing years.¹¹⁰

Just as Brown believes his wife colluded with psychiatrists to trap him in mental hospitals, he thinks she and his doctors were in cahoots to keep him in a sexless marriage. In agreement with Brown's wife, one of his doctors tried to enforce strict sexual norms on him. Brown claims that this doctor abused his authority, “pontificated,” saying: "you've made your bed, now you must lie in it," and continued, "we will not consider you completely cured until you are ready to make the best of your marriage."¹¹¹ Brown describes repeated sessions with psychiatrists who criticized his infidelity, moralizing that, "your prick belongs in your wife."¹¹² Brown seems to believe that has his prolific sex drive and tendency to cheat been considered socially acceptable, he would not have been considered mad at all.

In addition to Brown's use of anti-psychiatry ideology to portray women and psychiatrists as stifling to male sex drives, in “Memoirs of an Intermittent Madman,” Brown rewrites masculinity as military courage using the language of war. He turns man's fight against mental illness into a masculine war against arbitrary social rules, and in comparing the sexually

¹⁰⁹Carlton Brown, “Memoirs of an Intermittent Madman,” *Playboy*, June 1972, 172.

¹¹⁰Carlton Brown, “Memoirs of an Intermittent Madman,” *Playboy*, June 1972, 174.

¹¹¹Carlton Brown, “Memoirs of an Intermittent Madman,” *Playboy*, June 1972, 172.

¹¹²Carlton Brown, “Memoirs of an Intermittent Madman,” *Playboy*, June 1972, 172.

repressed man to both World War II veterans and American revolutionary patriots, he reimages masculinity not as just heterosexual sex, but as soldier-like courage.

For example, Brown compares his experience with sexual repression to the post-traumatic stress of World War II veterans, implying that his everyday escape from marriage norms and sexually repressive psychiatry to a more prolific sex life is comparable to that of an American military hero.

During World War Two--in which a substantial portion of all U. S. casualties were "mental"--individual soldiers reacted to the stress of combat by displaying one or several of the diverse behavioral phenomena that have been classified as "psychotic." Often, removal from the scene and relief from duty brought about recovery from combat breakdowns in as short a time as a day or two. It is evident that these breakdowns did not represent long-latent "mental illnesses" but temporary reactions that varied according to differences in temperament. It became an axiom that every man, no matter how "normal" or "healthy," had a breaking point; it was presumed that if he didn't crack up under one kind of stress, he would under another.¹¹³

Also according to Brown, he and his asylum cohorts "were the sort of community of the displaced one might find in an Army barracks."¹¹⁴ In his suggestion that a sexually repressed civilian, mistreated by psychiatrists, should be granted the same sympathy granted veterans, or those drafted to war, Brown turns the want for sexual expression from one of a mentally weak coward into one of a brave soldier, envisioning masculinity as courage to pursue sexuality.

In addition to his identification with World War II veterans, Brown draws comparisons between the sexually repressed man and patriotic rebels from the American Revolution. The subtitle for "Memoirs of an Intermittent Madman" reads "A Declaration of Rebellion against a therapeutic tyranny that threatens all who find their state of consciousness against the norm," referencing revolutionary patriots' Declaration of Independence against the tyrannical King

¹¹³Carlton Brown, "Memoirs of an Intermittent Madman," *Playboy*, June 1972, 178.

¹¹⁴Carlton Brown, "Memoirs of an Intermittent Madman," *Playboy*, June 1972, 172.

George.¹¹⁵ Moreover, Brown describes Jones' insanity as "excursions into madness" with the goal of an "overthrow of repression," imbuing the struggle for more sex with a kind of adventurously brave quality.¹¹⁶

Brown further codifies these allusions to the military libertarian masculinity of sexual liberation with explicit references to anti-psychiatrist Thomas Szasz's work, which itself was cloaked in the language of libertarian freedom from oppression. Brown quotes Szasz's *Law, Liberty and Psychiatry*, in which he claims Szasz encapsulates his experience of madness perfectly, referencing the traditionally republican ethic of personal responsibility:

That insofar as men are human beings, not machines, they always have some choice in how they act--hence, they are always responsible for their conduct. There is method in madness, no less than in sanity.¹¹⁷

Brown ends his piece with a final anti-psychiatry reference to an American masculine myth remembered since the era of patriot Benjamin Franklin: the "self-made man." Brown says:

If the choice must be made, I want it to be unequivocally clear that it has been mine, so that it may be said of me, and I may say of myself, there, now, is a responsible, self-made madman.¹¹⁸

Brown's use of revolutionary, military language to discuss sexual liberation from madness, coupled with his earlier wife blaming for his condition, combine to portray as men as misogynistic militiamen, courageous in their ability to blame psychiatry and women for their problems.

¹¹⁵Carlton Brown, "Memoirs of an Intermittent Madman," *Playboy*, June 1972, 171.

¹¹⁶Carlton Brown, "Memoirs of an Intermittent Madman," *Playboy*, June 1972, 182.

¹¹⁷Carlton Brown, "Memoirs of an Intermittent Madman," *Playboy*, June 1972, 180.

¹¹⁸Carlton Brown, "Memoirs of an Intermittent Madman," *Playboy*, June 1972, 182.

“Suicide”¹¹⁹

A few months after *Playboy* published “Memoirs of an Intermittent Madman,” in another report on anti-psychiatry theories, *Playboy* again argued against psychiatry in favor of male sexual freedom in “Suicide,” reconceiving of masculinity as both misogyny and American Revolutionary courage to pursue sex. “Suicide” begins with an image:¹²⁰ [See Appendix 1]

A nude white woman stands calmly atop a floor tiled in razor blades. She walks forward, her body still and calmly unemotional. She has no dynamism, no forward movement; rather, she looks like empty, braindead, like a statue. Above the pattern of safety razors, a sky of indigo blue and dusty lilac clouds float behind her. Two eyes, fractured into fragments, blink at the foreground. Huge and blue, with cloud-shaped experts, their placement in front of the exposed woman on the razor blades, coupled with their spottiness, implies that the viewer is looking through someone’s eyes into their mind’s desire. The woman vapidly greets the *Playboy* reader, colored for his voyeuristic consumption, welcoming him to stare at her vulnerability before reading the text below: “Suicide.”¹²¹

The title, coupled with the woman on top, indicates a woman teetering on the precipice of self-inflicted death. However, in the report on mental illness that follows, *Playboy* author Sam Blum exhibits no sympathy for the insane woman, who, like Phil’s Rita Garcia from the 1956 “I Am Committing Suicide,” has only driven herself crazy in her desire for male attention. The same femininity that makes her sexually desirous also makes her weak, unstable, and, ironic given the topic of the article, insane. In multiple anecdotes in “Suicide,” an investigation of

¹¹⁹Sam Blum, “Suicide,” *Playboy*, November 1972, 148-150, 268, 270-274.

¹²⁰Gervasio Gallardo, *Playboy*, November 1972, 148-149.

¹²¹Sam Blum, “Suicide,” *Playboy*, November 1972, 148.

relative theories of madness and anti-psychiatry, Blum depicts women who kill themselves as attention-seekers craving male approval or love, while showing men afflicted with depression as sadly succumbing to social norms of masculinity. Like Carlton Brown, Blum demeans women in his discussion of anti-psychiatry, affirming masculinity in the process. For example, Blum gives the pathetic story of an overdose by a woman looking for her husband's love:

A husband. . . came home at three A.M. to find his wife unconscious, an empty sleeping-pill container in the wastepaper basket and on the table a note, 'Wake me if you love me.' He threw the note down and left. She died.¹²²

Another anecdote given by Blum tells the same story:

By taking an overdose of slow-acting barbiturates several hours before her husband returns from work, a woman is trying to tell him that she is suffering.¹²³

Finally, in his most damning tale, Blum interviews a woman who tacitly admits her intention to try to kill herself only to gain sympathy from her ex-husband and revenge against her male doctor.

I wasn't thinking about life or death or anything like that. . . I was just out to get that goddamned doctor, and maybe make my ex-old man feel bad in the bargain. It was pure dumb luck that it didn't kill me. . . I was in the hospital in a coma for four days. And now . . . well, I'm glad to be alive, anyway. I don't think I'm suicidal anymore--at least not at the moment. Maybe I had to go through something like this to get it out of my system. But I sure don't think killing myself is the best way of getting even with that son-of-a-bitch doctor. He never did call.¹²⁴

In these anecdotes, misogynistic by design, Blum shows women as both weak and sexually available for men. Just like Rita Garcia, even as these women offer up their bodies for male sexual pleasure, their womanhood is dismissed as insane and they are granted no access to the anti-psychiatry liberation which Blum extends to men.

¹²²Sam Blum, "Suicide," *Playboy*, November 1972, 271.

¹²³Sam Blum, "Suicide," *Playboy*, November 1972, 271.

¹²⁴Sam Blum, "Suicide," *Playboy*, November 1972, 270.

Moreover, just as in Carlton Brown's "Memoirs of an Intermittent Madman," in "Suicide," Blum imbues his discussion of anti-psychiatry with the language of war, specifically the American Revolution, to reconceive of masculinity as combative courage. In "Suicide," like in "Memoirs of an Intermittent Madman," Blum applies anti-psychiatry advocate Thomas Szasz's anti-institutionalism to *Playboy's* individualistic image of masculinity, comparing escape from psychiatry to escape from political tyranny. Blum calls Szasz a "civil-libertarian" before quoting a statement Szasz wrote in a 1971 issue of *The Antioch Review*:

In regarding the desire to live as a legitimate human aspiration, but not the desire to die, the suicidologist stands Patrick Henry's famous exclamation, 'Give me liberty, or give me death!' on its head. In effect, he says, 'Give him commitment, give him electroshock, give him lobotomy, give him lifelong slavery, but do not let him choose death!'¹²⁵

By using American Revolutionary patriot Patrick Henry's famous cry for American freedom as a call for overthrow of psychiatric oppression, Szasz, and by proxy, Blum, establish anti-psychiatry and madness in the face of oppression as brave, masculine choices in an increasingly prescriptive society. Anti-psychiatrists, and the men they help sexually liberate, in *Playboy's* view, are libertarian patriots in the mold of Patrick Henry, a man so committed to American mores of freedom he would dare to kill himself before giving up his right to die.

Blum again quotes Szasz to justify broad based, very traditionally "American" conceptions of civil rights, yet again using an American heritage of libertarian manhood to claim that psychiatry is oppressive. "Suicide," he says, "like dangerously overdrinking or overeating or not following your doctor's orders, is an unqualified human right."¹²⁶ Blum ends his piece with a morbid question about rights to life and death, but qualifies it by again reiterating that while men

¹²⁵Sam Blum, "Suicide," *Playboy*, November 1972, 150.

¹²⁶Sam Blum, "Suicide," *Playboy*, November 1972, 150.

have the right to die, a repressive society should not force them that point against their will.

Should society grant people the right to kill themselves? Perhaps it should. But since people kill themselves when miserable, exhausted, lonely, frightened, deluded, ashamed, enraged and without hope, and the pain, not death, is the enemy they need help in defeating, we should make sure that no one kills himself for a reason that need not have existed in the first place.¹²⁷

Blum's use of Szasz's rights and revolutions language, coupled with his simultaneous sexualization and exclusion of women from narratives of psychiatric abuse, reinforce the militant misogyny first described in "Memoirs of an Intermittent Madman." Per *Playboy's* usage, anti-psychiatry makes women naturally insane and weak, positing men as their courageous, soldier-like counterparts.

"Psychiatric Escapee"¹²⁸

Playboy's discussion of anti-psychiatry extended beyond these two news articles and into several letters, published in "The Playboy Forum," a series of conversations on social issues first published in July 1963 and billed as "an interchange of ideas between reader and editor on subjects raised by "the playboy philosophy" and a space to grant readers "greater opportunity to respond- pro and con- to the subjects and issues raised in the editorial series."¹²⁹ In one especially illustrative example, a man writes that he is "imprisoned" in an asylum because of false claims of sexual improprieties:

I am imprisoned in a mental hospital and charged with escaping from a psychiatric institution. I could be sentenced to up to two years in prison. I'm a physician, and in 1967 I was accused of improprieties by female patients. Even though the charges were false, my lawyer judged that the safest course was for me to agree to commitment as a criminal

¹²⁷Sam Blum, "Suicide," *Playboy*, November 1972, 274.

¹²⁸"Psychiatric Escapee" in "The Playboy Forum," *Playboy*, July 1972, 52, 56.

¹²⁹"The Playboy Forum," *Playboy*, July 1963, 39.

sexual psychopath, because this would be viewed as an illness, whereas if I stood trial and were convicted of a felony I could never again practice medicine.¹³⁰

Whether or not the claims of improprieties were true, *Playboy*'s inclusion of his story portrays man's interactions with psychiatry in the same way that "Memoirs of an Intermittent Madman" and "Suicide" do: as a collusion between hypersexual women and psychiatrists, who abuse the political power of their profession to trap men.

"Homosexuality and Manhood"

In addition to these anti-psychiatry articles and letters that rewrote masculinity as misogyny and American freedom, *Playboy* published several letters in the "Playboy Forum" in which gay men argued for acceptance of homosexuality using the same anti-psychiatry, misogynistic military masculinity as their straight *Playboy* counterparts. Like Brown, Blum, and men from "The Playboy Forum," these men denied the authority of psychiatry, instead using both misogyny and military masculinity to overcome psychiatry, so that, while homosexual, their stories still fit neatly within *Playboy*'s anti-psychiatry manhood.

For example, an anonymous gay reader and American soldier wrote to "The Playboy Forum" from Vietnam to display his disgust at effeminate men. Using his status as an "American Serviceman" and disgust at femininity to prove his masculinity in spite of his homosexuality, he writes:

I do not feel like a "pansy." In fact, I detest effeminate men. I do not act, look or feel effeminate . . . Nor do I have long hair, ridiculous clothing or a lisp. If you were to see me, you would see a strong young American Serviceman. I work with other men; we do men's work- and sometimes, in Vietnam, that's one hell of a job. I take orders and I give orders. It's a rugged life, and I like it.¹³¹

¹³⁰"Psychiatric Escapee" in "The Playboy Forum," *Playboy*, July 1972, 52, 56.

¹³¹"Survival and Homosexuality" in "The Playboy Forum," *Playboy*, June 1967, 174.

His letter perfectly reflects *Playboy's* new conception of masculinity under anti-psychiatry: as a misogynistic disgust at women's weakness and emphasis on military characteristics of men. *Playboy's* publication of the letter, moreover, indicates his acceptance within the magazine's boys' club.

Three months later, in the September 1967 "Playboy Forum," *Playboy* published a sneering response from an anonymous reader who claimed amusement at, "the homosexual soldier who was convinced that nobody could recognize him as a deviate." According to this letter, any "sophisticated student of psychology" would be able to spot a gay man from "20 feet away."¹³² He calls the Vietnam soldier's belief that his rugged masculinity covers his homosexuality no more than "strange self-delusion," as every gay man is "as effeminate as a soprano."¹³³

Playboy responds to this reader's psychological ability to spot gay men based on effeminate characteristics with their favorite sexologist, Alfred Kinsey.

Contrary to your self-delusion, the majority of homosexuals do not have any visible stigmata by which they can be recognized. Skilled Kinsey investigators, trained in the social sciences, could identify only 15 percent of homosexuals in their male study group before interviewing them.¹³⁴

Four months later, *Playboy* published a gay man's response from reader Lew Norton. Norton responds to the serviceman's disgust at womanlike homosexual men by reconstructing masculinity not as the antithesis of femininity, but as masculine courage.

At the heart of all our problems is the ingrained belief that, being homosexual, we are not men. I have never met a homosexual who was not in some way defensive about himself,

¹³²"Detecting Deviates" in "The Playboy Forum," *Playboy*, September 1967, 81, 184.

¹³³"Detecting Deviates" in "The Playboy Forum," *Playboy*, September 1967, 81, 184.

¹³⁴Editorial response to: "Detecting Deviates" in "The Playboy Forum," *Playboy*, September 1967, 81, 184.

though the defense takes many forms. . . Open effeminacy, as you may not realize, is a form of defiance that takes great courage. . . To me, a man is someone who knows what he is, accepts it and spends his life fighting to make the most of it. By that definition, real men are perhaps the smallest minority group, but there is nothing in your or my homosexuality that necessarily precludes us from it.¹³⁵

However, despite this message that manhood involves “defiance of great courage” and “fighting” for a life lived honestly, even effeminately, Norton makes sure to affirm his masculinity, stating, “my hair is of moderate length and I don’t lisp.”¹³⁶ Like the anti-psychiatry men of “Memoirs of and Intermittent Madman,” “Suicide,” and the letter from the “Psychiatric Escapee,” these gay men, helped by *Playboy* and Kinsey, overcome sexually repressive psychiatry through affirmations of masculinity constructed as courage, Vietnam war manhood, and, always, mockery and denigration of femininity.

“Let Me Be”¹³⁷

In “Let Me Be,” a “Playboy Forum” letter published in July 1971, yet another gay man demeans femininity in order to overcome homophobic psychiatry, modeling the misogynistic anti-psychiatry practiced by heterosexual playboys. The anonymous reader writes that women disgust him “to the point of nausea.”¹³⁸ He hates “their complicated sex organs and such unclean phenomena as menstruation.”¹³⁹ In addition to his disgust of the female body, according to the author, people blame his homosexuality on his heavily female environment; he lives with his

¹³⁵Lew Norton, “Homosexuality and Manhood” in “The Playboy Forum,” *Playboy*, October 1967, 56.

¹³⁶Lew Norton, “Homosexuality and Manhood” in “The Playboy Forum,” *Playboy*, October 1967, 56.

¹³⁷“Let Me Be” in “The Playboy Forum,” *Playboy*, July 1971, 52.

¹³⁸“Let Me Be” in “The Playboy Forum,” *Playboy*, July 1971, 52.

¹³⁹“Let Me Be” in “The Playboy Forum,” *Playboy*, July 1971, 52.

mother and sister. He counteracts this charge by affirming his masculinity, denying that he is effeminate or stereotypically gay.

I don't feel unmasculine; I deplore femininity entirely. I don't believe in the gay-liberation movement and I don't have long hair or wear faggy clothing.¹⁴⁰

Just like Brown and Blum, and Phil in "I Am Committing Suicide," this writer uses claims of masculinity, gained through the denigration of queerness and femininity, as proof that he does not need psychiatric treatment.

I like being a homosexual and will continue to be one. Many people reading this letter will probably say I have some kind of mental problem and should see psychiatrist. But it happens that I don't want treatment; I want to be left alone.¹⁴¹

Although he mentions no explicit anti-psychiatry theories, the message is the same as that repeated over and over again as *Playboy* attempted to liberate all male behavior: deploring women can become a psychiatrically viable form of sexual freedom for men. And, if that psychiatric theory reinforces ideals of American wartime manhood, even better.

In Brown and Blum's articles, as well as in letters to "The Playboy Forum" from heterosexual and homosexual men, *Playboy's* use of anti-psychiatry thus freed men from the mental hospital, where, upon parole, they promptly visited the brothel, becoming pimps themselves. In their use of anti-psychiatry, *Playboy* left female inmates trapped inside the asylum, inside the whorehouse, or on a staircase of razorblades, all which their magazine helped build, centerfold by centerfold, while allowing a convenient exit for gay men. So long as they helped keep women like Rita Garcia inside the whorehouse, *Playboy* seemed to allow gay men to do what they wanted.

¹⁴⁰"Let Me Be" in "The Playboy Forum," *Playboy*, July 1971, 52.

¹⁴¹"Let Me Be" in "The Playboy Forum," *Playboy*, July 1971, 52.

III MALE GAYS, MALE GAZE Conversations on Homophobic Psychiatry in *Playboy*

Five hundred million years of evolution have established the male-female standard as the functionally healthy pattern of human sexual fulfillment- a pattern promoted and documented in Playboy since its inception. Only the gravest anxiety can pervert the emotional and biological mating congruities between man and woman. ¹⁴²

- Charles Socarides, *Playboy*

When asked by the sheriff what it would take for him to confess to the murder of his wife Irma, Fred Ludwig gave an unexpected answer. "I would like a lady's vanity case, with everything complete. Face powder, lipstick and a cake of mascara." ¹⁴³ Fred was a "stocky, muscular butcher," on death row for turning his wife into "sausage stuffing," but for his confession, he asked not for immunity, but the chance to die as he wished he had lived: a fairy. ¹⁴⁴

The journalist on his case, and *Playboy* article narrator of his experience, Ben Hecht, initially thinks Fred is "potty." ¹⁴⁵ However, with Fred's confession in limbo, Hecht puts his psychoanalysis on hold and instead rushes to fetch a makeup case from Queen Lil's whorehouse down the street. When Hecht arrives at Queen Lil's, he finds eight nude women touching and rolling around with each other. In his narration of Irma's murder, Hecht pauses to remember the scene, allowing the reader to momentarily revel with him in the bacchanal.

Five of them were nude. The other three wore bloomers. They were variously shaped, from skinny blondes with stringy breasts to Turkish delights with watermelon udders. Two of them, one with bloomers and one without, were startlingly attractive. They looked more like sleepwalking princesses than five-dollar whores . . . I sat dizzily in this sudden Witches' Sabbath of nudes, rolling on the floor with delight, guffawing and

¹⁴²Charles Socarides, "Homosexuality as Disorder" in "The Playboy Forum," *Playboy*, June 1970, 58.

¹⁴³Ben Hecht, "The Fairy," *Playboy*, November 1962, 184.

¹⁴⁴Ben Hecht, "The Fairy," *Playboy*, November 1962, 88.

¹⁴⁵Ben Hecht, "The Fairy," *Playboy*, November 1962, 185.

yelping and kicking each other's bare behinds . . . I noticed suddenly that there was one figure in the sweltering, perfume-reeking parlor who was not participating in the upheaval of nudes. She was the billowiest of the Turkish delights, easily 200 pounds and with an infant's face. This great pile of flesh sat rolling her eyes at me and moaned with passion as I looked at her. She also jiggled her several bellies up and down with both hands for my further seduction. I found myself sweating and staring at the incredible creature in a sort of hypnosis. I was unaware that the whooping and singing had ended until I saw Queen Lil walk to the massive nude and kick her thigh briskly . . . It was Tiny who waddled up to me like a clinic of flesh.¹⁴⁶

Hecht experiences a disquieting combination of disgust and desire as lithe, thin women lounge nude next to Tiny, the obese whore whose grotesque, jiggly fat has covered any sex appeal.

Finally, after a gratuitous looking at the rotund, fleshy prostitutes, Hecht grabs the make up from Queen Lil and hurries back to Fred, who begins painting his face while describing how he turned his wife into sausage. Hecht writes:

Fred Ludwig's back had been turned to us as he talked . . . I looked now and saw that Fred was smearing a second coat of lipstick on his lips. He was making them look twice as thick as they were by a clever application of the bright-red rouge . . . And as he went on with his story of hate, hot pants, murder, dismemberment and sausage manufacture, Fred continued to make up his face, as if he were a belle going to a ball. He put heavy smears of rouge on his cheeks, rubbed them down deftly, and then applied clouds of powder to the skin of his face, neck and uncovered shoulders. He handled the powder puff as if it were an instrument of bliss.¹⁴⁷

As Fred confesses, a prison guard cries out in shocked dismay, "For God's sake! What's he doin'?" Pete -- look at the sonofabitch!"¹⁴⁸ However, the guard screams not in response to Fred's human sausage making, or even his vivid description of his sexual relationship with a man, Mr. Claude Charlus.¹⁴⁹ Rather, the guard is shocked and disturbed by the killer's blissful powdering of his

¹⁴⁶Ben Hecht, "The Fairy," *Playboy*, November 1962, 185.

¹⁴⁷Ben Hecht, "The Fairy," *Playboy*, November 1962, 186.

¹⁴⁸Ben Hecht, "The Fairy," *Playboy*, November 1962, 186.

¹⁴⁹Ben Hecht, "The Fairy," *Playboy*, November 1962, 186.

cheeks, the gentle flutter of his eyelashes after treated with Queen Lil's mascara wand. Put simply, he is horrified by a man's want to be feminine. Hecht concurs, writing that Fred's "elation" at his feminine makeover disturbed him even more than Tiny, the fat prostitute from Queen Lil's:

The naked and obese Tiny with her folds of belly and infant's face had distressed me. But Fred Ludwig seemed . . . more wildly distressing than a hundred Tinys as he turned his face to me.¹⁵⁰

Hecht's simultaneous disgust Fred's effeminacy and Tiny's ugly fatness, the perverse enjoyment the reader can take in looking in at Hecht's trip to the whorehouse, the slight suspicion that Fred might just be absolutely nuts, and shock that a killer was "equipped with feminine wiles" rather than outrage that a killer ground his wife into sausage.¹⁵¹ The moral developed in this complex yet honest narration of lady killing, prostitute peeping, and prison drag is *Playboy's* prioritization of male sexual enjoyment of women and weird propriety towards proper gender performance over offence at homosexuality, even if it might be "potty."¹⁵² As seen in the last chapter, "The Brothel and the Mental Hospital," Hecht and the guard's feelings that Fred's want for gay sex is less shocking than a want to be more female would be codified by *Playboy* in the late 1960s through conversations on misogynistic yet sexually liberating anti-psychiatry. However, while *Playboy* was willing to publish gay men who openly deplored femininity in the vein of their anti-psychiatry, misogynistic manhood, the magazine still used damning psychiatric authority to perpetuate the myth that homosexuality needed to be fixed when it benefitted their lust for women, a dissonance that becomes apparent in their engagement with explicitly homophobic

¹⁵⁰Ben Hecht, "The Fairy," *Playboy*, November 1962, 186.

¹⁵¹Ben Hecht, "The Fairy," *Playboy*, November 1962, 88.

¹⁵²Ben Hecht, "The Fairy," *Playboy*, November 1962, 185.

psychiatry. As Hefner did with Freud and Kinsey in his earlier “Playboy Philosophies,” reporting on their homophilic theories while simultaneously citing psychiatrists who believed looking at more nude women could foster heterosexuality, *Playboy* denied the full utility gay activists could gain from anti-psychiatry by also validating theories of homophobic psychiatrists.

By the late 1960s, years after “The Fairy” was published and just as *Playboy* was using anti-psychiatry to justify sexual liberation for men, another revolution against psychiatric control was gaining notice and credibility: the fight by gay rights activists to remove homosexuality as a pathology from the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, the official guidebook of mental illnesses issued by the American Psychiatric Association.

The Development of Homophobic Psychiatry in America

Despite Freudian beginnings that exhibited acceptance towards homosexuality, by the American Psychiatric Association’s publication of the first Diagnostic and Statistical Manual in 1952, Freud’s letter to the American mother that homosexuality was “assuredly no advantage, but it is nothing to be ashamed of, no vice, no degradation” had been discarded.¹⁵³ After Freud’s death in 1939, American psychoanalysts reinterpreted or abandoned his theory of innate bisexuality in order to classify homosexuality as a pathology.¹⁵⁴ Beginning in the 1940s, American psychoanalysts instead based their analysis of homosexuality on the work of Sandor

¹⁵³Jack Drescher, “Out of DSM: Depathologizing Homosexuality,” *Behavioral Sciences* 5, no. 4 (December 2015): 569, accessed April 17, 2017, <http://web.a.ebscohost.com.proxy.library.georgetown.edu/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=81647b6d-8ae2-42c6-bf7f-2977e5061194%40sessionmgr4010&vid=1&hid=4002>.

¹⁵⁴Jack Drescher, “Out of DSM: Depathologizing Homosexuality,” *Behavioral Sciences* 5, no. 4 (December 2015): 569, accessed April 17, 2017, <http://web.a.ebscohost.com.proxy.library.georgetown.edu/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=81647b6d-8ae2-42c6-bf7f-2977e5061194%40sessionmgr4010&vid=1&hid=4002>.

Rado, who, unlike Freud, denied even the existence of bisexuality and homosexuality.¹⁵⁵ In two papers, published in 1940 and 1949, Rado set about repudiating Freud's theory of innate bisexuality.¹⁵⁶ In his 1940 paper, "Critical Examination of the Concept of Bisexuality," Rado first disagreed with Freud by establishing heterosexuality as the only biological norm.¹⁵⁷ Published just one year after Freud's death, the article would affect psychiatric research at least through the 1970s, legitimizing further midcentury research that homosexuality was a pathology that could be cured.¹⁵⁸ Psychiatrist Ricard C. Pillard calls the 1940 paper a "harbinger breaking sharply with Freud" that was used as psychiatric justification for homophobia.¹⁵⁹

Later, in 1949, Rado continued his work to establish heterosexuality as the only human biological norm, publishing his second influential article on the subject, entitled, "An Adaptational View of Sexual Behavior."¹⁶⁰ In addition to Rado's influence on the decision to include homosexuality as a curable pathology in the 1952 DSM I, his work would heavily

¹⁵⁵Jack Drescher, "Out of DSM: Depathologizing Homosexuality," *Behavioral Sciences* 5, no. 4 (December 2015): 569, accessed April 17, 2017, <http://web.a.ebscohost.com.proxy.library.georgetown.edu/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=81647b6d-8ae2-42c6-bf7f-2977e5061194%40sessionmgr4010&vid=1&hid=4002>.

¹⁵⁶Robert M. Friedman, "The Psychoanalytic Model of Male Homosexuality: A Historical Critique," *The Psychoanalytic Review* Vol. 73, No. 4 (Winter 1986): 68, accessed April 17, 2017, http://williamapercy.com/wiki/images/The_Psychoanalytic_model.pdf.

¹⁵⁷Edward J. Tejjirian, *Sexuality and the Devil: Symbols of Love, Power, and Fear in Male Psychology* (New York: Routledge, 1990), 99.

¹⁵⁸Edward J. Tejjirian, *Sexuality and the Devil: Symbols of Love, Power, and Fear in Male Psychology* (New York: Routledge, 1990), 99.

¹⁵⁹Richard C. Pillard, "A Genetic Influence on Sexual Orientation" in *Science and Homosexualities*, ed. Vernon A. Rosario (New York: Routledge, 1997), 228.

¹⁶⁰Edward J. Tejjirian, *Sexuality and the Devil: Symbols of Love, Power, and Fear in Male Psychology* (New York: Routledge, 1990), 101.

influence the psychologies of Irving Bieber and Charles Socarides, two American psychiatrists who developed “cures” for homosexuality.¹⁶¹

In 1962, Irving Bieber published the influential *Homosexuality: A Psychoanalytic Study*. According to Bieber, while Freud’s ambivalence towards homosexuality in his letter to the American mother, “epitomize psychoanalytic opinion of what may be expected from the psychoanalysis of homosexuals,” his study shows that conversion to heterosexuality may be more possible than previously thought.¹⁶² In the treatment reported in *Homosexuality: A Psychoanalytic Study*, 27 percent of homosexual men converted from homosexuality to “exclusive heterosexuality.”¹⁶³ Based on these findings, Bieber concluded that,

many homosexuals became exclusively heterosexual in psychoanalytic treatment. Although this change may be more easily accomplished by some than by others, in our judgment a heterosexual shift is a possibility for all homosexuals who are strongly motivated to change . . . heterosexuality is the biologic norm and that unless interfered with all individuals are heterosexual.¹⁶⁴

In 1968, six years after Bieber published *Homosexuality: A Psychoanalytic Study*, Charles Socarides published *The Overt Homosexual*, the beginning of a decades long career as an outspoken believer that homosexual men could become heterosexual through therapy. Like Bieber, Socarides enjoyed both professional success and scathing derision from gay rights

¹⁶¹Jack Drescher, “Out of DSM: Depathologizing Homosexuality,” *Behavioral Sciences* 5, no. 4 (December 2015): 569, accessed April 17, 2017, <http://web.a.ebscohost.com.proxy.library.georgetown.edu/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=81647b6d-8ae2-42c6-bf7f-2977e5061194%40sessionmgr4010&vid=1&hid=4002>.

¹⁶²Irving Bieber, *Homosexuality: A Psychoanalytic Study* (New York, Basic Books, Inc., 1962), 275-276.

¹⁶³Irving Bieber, *Homosexuality: A Psychoanalytic Study* (New York, Basic Books, Inc., 1962), 276.

¹⁶⁴Irving Bieber, *Homosexuality: A Psychoanalytic Study* (New York, Basic Books, Inc., 1962), 319.

advocates. Rado's ignorance of homosexuality and Bieber's and Socarides' subsequent "cures" for homosexuality enjoyed credibility within the psychiatric community through the early 1970s, and social and political popularity for decades after.¹⁶⁵

While Bieber and Socarides were certainly powerful, they were by no means without their opponents. In 1965, Judd Marmor, also loosely associated with anti-psychiatry and mentioned in *Playboy* in conversations on psychiatric abuse of heterosexual men, published *Sexual Inversion*, in which he argued that heteronormative theories of psychiatry are not purely scientific but socially influenced. He states that:

We must conclude that there is nothing inherently "unnatural" about life experiences that predispose an individual to a preference for homosexual object relations except insofar as this preference represents a socially condemned form of behavior in our culture and consequently carries with it certain sanctions and handicaps.¹⁶⁶

In addition to his assertion that homophobia is socially, not scientifically, justified, Marmor notes, like anti-psychiatrist Szasz, the unfair use of the law to suppress these socially constructed views of homosexuality.

The law considers it antisocial and applies punitive sanctions; the clinical psychiatrist evaluates it as "sick" behavior and seeks to modify it "therapeutically." In other times and in other cultures, however, such sanctions or modifications have not always been applied.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁵ In 1978, Socarides argued against the further exclusion of "sexual disorders" from the upcoming DSM. According to Socarides, if changes to the DSM are, "due to social and/or political activism, neither the goal of individual liberties nor the best interests of society are served... the tragic consequences of the politicizing of the sexual area of diagnosis have already occurred as homosexuality has been deleted as a psychiatric disorder from the latest printing (July 1974) of the DSM 2." C W. Socarides, "The sexual deviations and the Diagnostic Manual." *American Journal Of Psychotherapy* 32, no. 3 (July 1978): 414, accessed March 14, 2017.

¹⁶⁶Judd Marmor, from *Sexual Inversion*, quoted in Jack Drescher, "Judd Marmor, Psychiatry and Homosexuality," *Journal Of Gay & Lesbian Psychotherapy* 10, no. 2 (April 2006): 118-119, accessed March 21, 2017, <http://web.a.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=6&sid=257fe7c8-9fd7-4b09-9696-ab1727831174%40sessionmgr4007&hid=4212>.

¹⁶⁷Judd Marmor, from *Sexual Inversion*, quoted in Jack Drescher, "Judd Marmor, Psychiatry and Homosexuality," *Journal Of Gay & Lesbian Psychotherapy* 10, no. 2 (April 2006): 119, accessed March

In addition to Marmor, outside of the psychiatric profession, gay rights advocates protested both the Rado influenced DSM I and the psychiatry it informed. Frank Kameny was a prominent public voice in this movement, and, in 1963, his Washington, D.C. gay advocacy organization, the Mattachine Society, released a statement:

In the absence of valid evidence to the contrary, homosexuality is not a sickness, disturbance, or other pathology in any sense, but is merely a preference, orientation, or propensity, on par with, and not different in kind, from heterosexuality.¹⁶⁸

Later, in 1968, Kameny coined the slogan “Gay is Good” as a positive affirmation of homosexuality against homophobia in psychiatry.¹⁶⁹ In 1971, after the 1970 APA meeting in San Francisco was loudly protested by a gay activist, Kameny was invited to organize a panel on homosexuality in psychiatry called Lifestyles of Nonpatient Homosexuals for that year’s convention.¹⁷⁰ At the 1972 APA meeting, Kameny participated in a panel discussion on homosexuality in psychiatry.¹⁷¹ He attended these yearly APA conferences through the 1973

21, 2017, <http://web.a.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=6&sid=257fe7c8-9fd7-4b09-9696-ab1727831174%40sessionmgr4007&hid=4212>.

¹⁶⁸Franklin Kameny, "How It All Started," *Journal Of Gay & Lesbian Mental Health* 13, no. 2 (March 2009): 77, accessed April 21, 2017, <http://web.b.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=389fe788-b99c-4b1b-bfce-7579621d0dac%40sessionmgr120&vid=1&hid=116>.

¹⁶⁹Franklin Kameny, "How It All Started," *Journal Of Gay & Lesbian Mental Health* 13, no. 2 (March 2009): 77, accessed April 21, 2017, <http://web.b.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=389fe788-b99c-4b1b-bfce-7579621d0dac%40sessionmgr120&vid=1&hid=116>.

¹⁷⁰Franklin Kameny, "How It All Started," *Journal Of Gay & Lesbian Mental Health* 13, no. 2 (March 2009): 78, accessed April 21, 2017, <http://web.b.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=389fe788-b99c-4b1b-bfce-7579621d0dac%40sessionmgr120&vid=1&hid=116>.

¹⁷¹Jack Drescher, "Judd Marmor, Psychiatry and Homosexuality," *Journal Of Gay & Lesbian Psychotherapy* 10, no. 2 (April 2006): 120, accessed March 21, 2017, <http://web.a.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=6&sid=257fe7c8-9fd7-4b09-9696-ab1727831174%40sessionmgr4007&hid=4212>.

meeting in Honolulu, where he secretly met with a cohort of professionally closeted gay psychiatrists to help write the resolution to remove homosexuality from the upcoming DSM III.¹⁷²

These integral voices in the developing conversation on homosexuality's place in psychiatry, and psychiatry's place in the lives of homosexuals, were published in *Playboy* in a series of letters in "The Playboy Forum," as well as a compiled "interview" on homosexuality in the early 1970s. *Playboy* used their platform as an authority in both sexual liberation and psychiatry to bring conversations on homosexuality out of APA conferences and Mattachine meetings and into the bachelor pads of the *Playboy* readership. In the pages of *Playboy*, Kameny, Marmor, Bieber, and Socarides, along with several homosexual and heterosexual readers, voiced their opinions on whether or not homosexuality was a pathology, and what types of homosexuality should be socially accepted. In these conversations on homophobic psychiatry, however, *Playboy* struggled fully repudiate the institution that had so helped codify their sexual liberation philosophy, only listening to gay men who aggressively fulfilled their other qualifications for membership into their literal all-boys club: a disgust at femininity and embrace of libertarian masculine courage based in the language of war. And, even then, these anti-psychiatrists were still excluded from full inclusion in *Playboy*'s masculinity, as the magazine still venerated psychiatry above all else, even above sexual liberation for their misogynistic, sexually repressed brothers.

¹⁷²Franklin Kameny, "How It All Started," *Journal Of Gay & Lesbian Mental Health* 13, no. 2 (March 2009): 80, accessed April 21, 2017, <http://web.b.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=389fe788-b99c-4b1b-bf9c-7579621d0dac%40sessionmgr120&vid=1&hid=116>.

Conversations with Kameny

Playboy's struggle between supporting gay men who subscribed to their brand of sexually liberal misogyny and repudiating the homophobic psychiatry they used to encourage the objectification of women becomes apparent in their conversations with Franklin E. Kameny, gay rights activist and outspoken opponent of the American Psychiatric Association.¹⁷³ Although Kameny subscribed to the anti-psychiatry ethos *Playboy* had used to justify unconstrained fucking for heterosexual men, in their conversations with the anti-psychiatry crusader, *Playboy* is unwilling to lend him either their history of utilizing Freud and Kinsey or their anti-psychiatry misogyny.

In March 1969, Kameny wrote in with his freshly coined anti-psychiatry slogan, "Gay is Good" in response to an earlier letter from behaviorist David Barlow. Kameny writes:

There is no valid scientific evidence to show that homosexuality is a sickness, illness, neurosis or pathology of any kind. It is a preferred orientation or propensity, not different in kind from heterosexuality. . . the problems of the homosexual stem from discrimination by the heterosexual majority. . . there is no valid ethical reason for a person to subject himself to conditioning therapy other than submission to societal prejudice. . . Barlow and his professional colleagues would be of greater service to the harassed homosexual minority if they. . . adopted a positive approach in which therapy

¹⁷³For the full conversation, involving Kameny, following David H. Barlow's "*Playboy Therapy*," see the following:

David H. Barlow, "*Playboy Therapy*" in "The Playboy Forum," *Playboy*, August 1968, 37.; Franklin E. Kameny, "Gay is Good" in "The Playboy Forum," *Playboy*, March 1969, 46.; David C. Rimm, "Therapy and Morality" in "The Playboy Forum," *Playboy*, June 1969, 64-65.; W. Dorr Legg, "Biological Predestination" in "The Playboy Forum," *Playboy*, June 1969, 65.; "Homosexuality as a Compulsion" in "The Playboy Forum," *Playboy*, June 1969, 65, 69.; Myra A. Josephs, "Penalizing Heterosexuals" in "The Playboy Forum," *Playboy*, June 1969, 69.; Rita LaPorte, "Compulsive Heterosexuals" in "The Playboy Forum," *Playboy*, June 1969, 69.; William Edward Glover, "The Nature of Homosexuality" in "The Playboy Forum," *Playboy*, August 1969, 48.; "Army of Quacks" in "The Playboy Forum," *Playboy*, August 1969, 48.; "A Double Life" in "The Playboy Forum," *Playboy*, August 1969, 49.; Wainwright Churchill III, "Nonexclusive Homosexuality" in "The Playboy Forum," *Playboy*, September 1969, 71-73.; Shelly Gordon, "Sexual Compulsions" in "The Playboy Forum," *Playboy*, September 1969, 73-74.; Franklin E. Kameny, "The Morality of Passing" in "The Playboy Forum," *Playboy*, September 1969, 74.; "I Dislike What I Am," in "The Playboy Forum," *Playboy*, September 1969, 74.

for a homosexual would consist of instilling in him a sense of confident self-acceptance so he could say with pride, "Gay is good."¹⁷⁴

While *Playboy's* decision to publish Kameny's "Gay is good" manifesto was in some sense progressive, the reader responses they published as well as their own editorial comments to Kameny indicate an allegiance to psychiatry that outweighed their commitment to the masculine anti-institutionalism of anti-psychiatry or sexual liberation for homosexual men.

In December 1969, reader Hank Brummer responded to Kameny's contention that "Gay is Good" in a letter that *Playboy* entitled "Morality and the Homosexual."¹⁷⁵ In the letter, Brummer says that homosexuals should be given the "right to defect" from gayness.¹⁷⁶ Brummer acknowledges that while, "it appears that both *Playboy* and Kameny are upholding the individual's right to be true to himself," the magazine's stance that gay people should be allowed the choice to stay gay is more freeing than Kameny's contention that social acceptance, not conversion, is the answer.¹⁷⁷ Brummer calls *Playboy*,

true to individual rights than Kameny. . . your view of individual freedom is, thus, more deeply rooted than Kameny's and, in my opinion, you're winning the debate so far.¹⁷⁸

Immediately after Brummer's letter, *Playboy* published another, entitled "The Nature of Homosexuality," in which an anonymous gay man wrote in thanking *Playboy* for their views on

¹⁷⁴Franklin E. Kameny, "Gay is Good" in "The Playboy Forum," *Playboy*, March 1969, 46.

¹⁷⁵Hank Brummer, "Morality and the Homosexual," in "The Playboy Forum," *Playboy*, December 1969, 82, 84.

¹⁷⁶Hank Brummer, "Morality and the Homosexual," in "The Playboy Forum," *Playboy*, December 1969, 82.

¹⁷⁷Hank Brummer, "Morality and the Homosexual," in "The Playboy Forum," *Playboy*, December 1969, 84.

¹⁷⁸Hank Brummer, "Morality and the Homosexual" in "The Playboy Forum," *Playboy*, December 1969, 84.

homosexuality: “as a homosexual, I wish to state that I consider your opinions 100 percent impeccable.”¹⁷⁹

However, despite *Playboy*'s obvious like for appearing to be accepting of homosexuality, when confronted with Kameny's direct repudiation of their favorite profession, they refused to allow him the same use of anti-psychiatry they had granted heterosexual men. Over and over again, as Kameny wrote in explaining his “Gay is Good” credo, *Playboy* published editorial responses that remained ambivalent towards viewing homosexuality as a psychiatric illness at best and downright rude at worst. In one editorial response, they said:

We need hardly to point out to you that moralistic scorn has been used through the ages as a stick with which to beat homosexuals; one might, therefore, expect leaders of the homophile movement to have some distaste for using that same weapon themselves.¹⁸⁰

And in another: “Sorry about your sensitivities, but when we're reporting scientific research, we'll stick, as far as possible, to scientific language.”¹⁸¹ Had *Playboy*'s engagement with psychiatry been one of true sexual liberation, they would have responded to Kameny with less apathetic vile. Even though Kameny aggressively fulfilled *Playboy*'s anti-institutionalist ethos, codified early in their writings on heterosexual liberation from sexually repressive psychiatry, the magazine still could not bring themselves to include gay men in their male sexual liberation utopia.

Socarides

In addition to their unwillingness to grant Kameny access to their misogynistic anti-

¹⁷⁹“The Nature of Homosexuality” in “The Playboy Forum,” *Playboy*, December 1969, 84.

¹⁸⁰Editorial response to “The Morality of Passing” in “The Playboy Forum,” *Playboy*, September 1969, 74.

¹⁸¹Editorial response to “Homosexuality and Morality” in “The Playboy Forum,” *Playboy*, September 1972, 74.

psychiatry, *Playboy* published letters that showed homophobic psychiatrists as sympathetic characters or explicitly advocated for the use of homophobic psychiatry to serve their heterosexual sexual liberation goals. For example, in “Are Homosexuals Sick?,” published in “The Playboy Forum,” reader Charles Tyrell criticizes psychiatrist Charles Socarides, notable conversion therapist, for his harmful use of the language of illness in his discussions of homosexuality. Specifically, Tyrell found fault with Socarides’ statement in a recent *Time* magazine article, that, “a human being is sick when he fails to function in his appropriate gender identity. . . must be declared that homosexuality is a form of emotional illness.”¹⁸² Tyrell thanks *Playboy* for the magazine’s comparatively neutral wordage, stating that *Playboy*’s engagement with homosexuality was much less offensive:

The Playboy Forum, in its discussion of homosexuality, has been careful not to be as disparaging as Dr. Socarides, having deliberately rejected the term sickness and saying only that homosexuality is a state that has “intrinsic disadvantages for the individual, disadvantages that would exist even in a tolerant society.”¹⁸³

However, while Tyrell “understands” Kameny’s rejection of psychiatry, he still feels “Dr. Socarides is evidently a humane and well-meaning man.”¹⁸⁴

Four months later after Tyrell’s letter was published, *Playboy* allowed Socarides the platform to respond:

Five hundred million years of evolution have established the male-female standard as the functionally healthy pattern of human sexual fulfillment- a pattern promoted and documented in *Playboy* since its inception. Only the gravest anxiety can pervert the

48. ¹⁸²Charles Tyrell, “Are Homosexuals Sick?” in “The Playboy Forum,” *Playboy*, February 1970,

48. ¹⁸³Charles Tyrell, “Are Homosexuals Sick?” in “The Playboy Forum,” *Playboy*, February 1970,

48. ¹⁸⁴Charles Tyrell, “Are Homosexuals Sick?” in “The Playboy Forum,” *Playboy*, February 1970,

emotional and biological mating congruities between man and woman.¹⁸⁵

Playboy's clear willingness to give credence to both Tyrell and Socarides shows their utter ambivalence towards the sexual liberation of gay men. In contrast to their antagonist treatment of Kameny, true anti-psychiatrist and sexual liberationist, *Playboy* published letters that treated Socarides with kindness and the assumption that he only had the best intentions. A few months after *Playboy* published this mildly homophobic exchange, the magazine printed a letter in support of *Playboy*'s mission for sex education for children. The author quotes Socarides as defense:

In doing away with sex education, we may be throwing away untold benefits that will probably come from the programs, including. . . lives blighted by sexual maladjustments.¹⁸⁶

Just as Hefner used homophobic psychiatry to normalize his objectification of women in his early "Playboy Philosophies," here, the magazine publishes validation of the homophobic Socarides without refutation, or even presenting a conflicting viewpoint, just because he justifies their sex education goals.

"Playboy Panel: Homosexuality"¹⁸⁷

In April 1971, *Playboy* published a "Playboy Panel" on homosexuality, in which the magazine once again reaffirmed the cultural control of homophobic psychiatry while trying to appear sexually and politically liberal. "Playboy Panels," described by the magazine as a "series of provocative conversations about subjects of interest on the contemporary scene," were

¹⁸⁵Charles Socarides, "Homosexuality as Disorder" in "The Playboy Forum," *Playboy*, June 1970, 58.

¹⁸⁶Walter Fidman, "Responsible Criticism" in "The Playboy Forum," *Playboy*, August 1969, 42.

¹⁸⁷"Playboy Panel: Homosexuality," *Playboy*, April 1971, 61-63, 67-68, 70, 72-74, 76, 78, 80, 84, 86, 88, 90, 92, 164, 178, 180, 182, 184-186, 189-191.

recurring discussions of social issues, often focused on sex and culture. The 1971 “Panel” addressed homosexuality directly, featuring a mock discussion between Irving Bieber, Paul Goodman, Richard H. Kuh, Dick Leitsch, Phyllis Lyon, Marya Mannes, Judd Marmor, Ted McIlvenna, Morris Ploscowe, William Simon, and Kenneth Tryan. Psychiatrists Irving Bieber, advocate of the belief that homosexuality was an illness and enemy of the gay liberation movement, contrasted with Judd Marmor, UCLA psychiatry professor and author of *Sexual Inversion*, who thought that homophobia was a social problem, not a biological one. These psychiatrists debated the merits and validity of their science, while the other panelists, mostly gay activists, offered their insights into the homosexual experience.

The conversation never actually took place; the “interviewer” cobbled responses from older interviews into a mock conversation.¹⁸⁸ In this faux panel, however fake it was, *Playboy* was able to construct homosexual masculinity exactly as they wanted, and the result is so far from inclusive or liberating that it manages to reinforce homophobic psychiatric authority while interviewing gay men whose lives were devoted against it. Like the heterosexual anti-psychiatrists, the gay men *Playboy* included objectify and demean femininity to prove they don’t need psychiatric treatment, attempting to access the anti-psychiatry, pro-war, misogynistic masculinity *Playboy* was so fond of proselytizing in their contemporaneous anti-psychiatry articles and letters. However, because *Playboy* was still willing to give psychiatry, even homophobic psychiatry, credence over homosexual sexual liberation, the gay men’s misogynistic crusade is futile. Even through misogyny and service in the American military, gay men are still unable to fully participate in *Playboy*’s manhood.

¹⁸⁸Jim Kepner, “‘That Playboy panel’: Is it a boon or an insult?,” *The Advocate*, April 14-27, 1971.

In the “Panel,” gay men try denigrating femininity in the style of heterosexual anti-psychiatrists in order to gain authority as they disagree with Bieber, the homophobic psychiatric expert. For example, when *Playboy* asks,

If homosexuals have such a close and comfortable relationship with women, why is it that when they imitate women, on stage or off, they often seem to copy--and sometimes caricature--the least likable and most grotesque elements of the female stereotype?¹⁸⁹

The gay men respond by associating overt femininity with whorish, gross behavior, just as Brown, Blum, and their gay counterparts had done in anti-psychiatry discussions. Leitsch says:

whenever homosexuals try to emulate the opposite sex, you're right that invariably they seem to choose the worst possible models. Drag queens usually dress themselves up like 42nd Street prostitutes.¹⁹⁰

Tynan acknowledges commonalities between undesirable qualities of women and undesirable qualities of gay men:

Waspish, spiteful, bitchy, malicious--these are some of the characteristics of a type of queer we've all met, and also, as you point out, among the less admired characteristics of women.¹⁹¹

After mocking femininity and queer men, the panelists again use *Playboy*'s misogynistic, warlike masculinity, codified during anti-psychiatry, to affirm homosexual masculinity by arguing for widespread acceptance of homosexual soldiers in the American military. *Playboy* includes responses that show homosexual men as masculine in their success as soldiers, perpetuating discrimination against men that seem too effeminate but also allowing appropriately masculine homosexual men access to the heterosexual arena of the military. The homosexual males on the panel continually repeat that they are adhering to liberal, masculine norms of American manhood

¹⁸⁹“Playboy Panel: Homosexuality,” *Playboy*, April 1971, 74-76.

¹⁹⁰“Playboy Panel: Homosexuality,” *Playboy*, April 1971, 76.

¹⁹¹“Playboy Panel: Homosexuality,” *Playboy*, April 1971, 76.

in order to repudiate the Rado school of psychiatric authority that was calling them insane. All of the gay panelists agreed that they found no reason why gay men should be excluded from the military, but only as long as they performed war appropriate masculinity. Tryan and McIlvenna defend homosexuality in the army with blasé arguments of irrelevancy. Tryan bluntly states that he does not see any reason why gay men should be excluded from the military, as straight men should be able to politely decline advances from them.¹⁹² McIlvenna argues that attempts at exclusion are simply futile:

Anyone who's had anything to do with the military knows that you get about the same number of homosexuals in the Service as you get in any other occupation, whether or not you try to screen them out. I think the military is fooling itself when it tries to exclude homosexuals.¹⁹³

Even as homophobic psychiatrist Bieber cites the success of homosexual men in past wars, he qualifies that gay men in the military should take pains to make their heterosexual cohorts feel comfortable. According to Bieber, in his “extensive military psychiatric experience” he “never encountered anyone whose homosexual behavior began in the Army, including men who had been separated from women for long periods.”¹⁹⁴ Thus, “the fear that the presence of homosexuals in the Armed Forces will result in the seduction of sexually immature soldiers is unsupported.”¹⁹⁵ Bieber only supports the inclusion of gay men in the military so long as they are appropriately masculine:

There were many homosexuals in the Armed Forces during World War Two, and quite a few did notable work and service. If it were up to me, I'd leave the decision up to the man himself. I would, however, exclude certain types--such as those who might offend the

¹⁹²“Playboy Panel: Homosexuality,” *Playboy*, April 1971, 182.

¹⁹³“Playboy Panel: Homosexuality,” *Playboy*, April 1971, 182.

¹⁹⁴“Playboy Panel: Homosexuality,” *Playboy*, April 1971, 182.

¹⁹⁵“Playboy Panel: Homosexuality,” *Playboy*, April 1971, 182.

sensibilities of the men they'd have to live with.¹⁹⁶

“That Playboy Panel: Is it a boon or an insult?”

Despite the generally friendly rapport between *Playboy* and the panelists, in which they laugh at women together and sympathize with homosexual men in the military, the overall message is still that psychiatry has authority, and, while gay men should be considered masculine in their misogyny and ability to serve in wars, homophobia prevails. Mere weeks after the *Playboy* panel was released, *The Advocate*, a gay magazine founded in Los Angeles in 1967, published a response questioning the helpfulness of the seemingly gay friendly piece. In an article entitled, “‘That Playboy panel’: Is it a boon or an insult?,” author Jim Kepner starts by granting *Playboy* the progressive street cred they so craved, calling the Panel the “frankest, most freewheeling rap on homosexuality yet to appear in a major general circulation magazine.”¹⁹⁷

However, after his initial praise, Kepner reveals the many flaws in *Playboy*'s portrayal of homosexuality, attacking the overemphasis they gave to Irving Bieber as well as their focus on male homosexuality. According to Kepner, “Dr. Bieber was given the lion’s share of the space (*Playboy* has for some time editorially favored his views)” and “Bieber. . . got somewhat more space than the three avowed homosexuals, with the moderator and the six friendly-to-neutral experts dividing the remaining third.”¹⁹⁸ Had *Playboy* genuinely been invested in establishing a pro-homosexual tone, they would have at least noted how widely criticized Bieber was: “The fallacies in Bieber’s book have been well noted in the homosexual press- but not on the panel, at

¹⁹⁶“Playboy Panel: Homosexuality,” *Playboy*, April 1971, 182.

¹⁹⁷Jim Kepner, “‘That Playboy panel’: Is it a boon or an insult?,” *The Advocate*, April 14-27, 1971.

¹⁹⁸Jim Kepner, “‘That Playboy panel’: Is it a boon or an insult?,” *The Advocate*, April 14-27, 1971.

least not after the final editing.”¹⁹⁹ Kepner reveals Bieber, and *Playboy* in their failure to repudiate him, as, ironically, sexually oppressive:

When Bieber opposes laws that punish homosexuals, he is being not only humanitarian, he is being consistent with the vested interest of the psychiatric profession. “You can’t have them,” therapists say to lawyers and the courts, “we want them.” We hope the therapists will forgive us if we are not overly grateful for the attempt to rescue us from the clutches of the legal profession and system. We wish to own ourselves.²⁰⁰

While *Playboy* allows homosexual men to present themselves as soldiers, and allows them space to simultaneously denigrate femininity and psychiatry, just like their anti-psychiatry cohorts, the magazine’s treatment of homophobic psychiatry shows a reticence to give gay men their own keys to the *Playboy* club. In *Playboy*’s use of anti-psychiatry, men like Fred would have been easily tricked into feeling that if they just removed their makeup and talked as if they had seen the worst of the trenches, they would be allowed acceptance from their sexually liberated brothers, united in arms against Wylie’s “womanization of America.” Alas, this was not the case; in their affirmations of Socarides and Bieber, and their patronizing dismissal of Kameny, *Playboy* shows they do not even care about sexual liberation for all men.

¹⁹⁹Jim Kepner, “‘That Playboy panel’: Is it a boon or an insult?,” *The Advocate*, April 14-27, 1971.

²⁰⁰Jim Kepner, “‘That Playboy panel’: Is it a boon or an insult?,” *The Advocate*, April 14-27, 1971.

CONCLUSION THE RABBIT AS A RORSCHACH TEST²⁰¹

As I was completing this project in the spring of 2017, *Playboy* entered an intellectual renaissance of sorts. After years of flagging subscription sales and dying readership in the age of internet pornography, the magazine finally realized that maybe they should return to publishing for the articles, not just for naked images of women. In March 2017, Connor Hefner, Hugh Hefner's son and now Chief Creative Officer of *Playboy*, published the first "Playboy Philosophy" since May 1966.

In his letter to readers, Hefner remembers his father's legacy as one of inclusion and libertarian rights, with a "tradition of tenaciously advocating for civil liberties and freedom of expression."²⁰² He says:

But one thing is clear that both my dad and I understand at its simplest form, and that is what *Playboy* and the United States strive to represent in their greatest forms: freedom.²⁰³

He goes on to explain *Playboy*'s importance for gay liberation specifically, positioning *Playboy* as an integral and progressive early advocate for the gay community:

Throughout the 1960s and onward, *Playboy*. . . advocated for the LGBTQ community when society had abandoned it or, worse, aggressively gone on the attack against it.²⁰⁴

²⁰¹This title alludes to a quotation from Connor Hefner's March 2017 "Playboy Philosophy," "Over the years, *Playboy* evolved into something much larger than he could ever have expected, and the Rabbit became a sort of Rorschach test of people's attitudes towards sex. Fans and detractors alike debated what the brand stood for and what the logo represented: What you saw in that Rabbit said more about you than about anything else." Connor Hefner, "The Playboy Philosophy," *Playboy*, March 2017, 18.

²⁰²Connor Hefner, "The Playboy Philosophy," *Playboy*, March 2017, 18.

²⁰³Connor Hefner, "The Playboy Philosophy," *Playboy*, March 2017, 18.

²⁰⁴Connor Hefner, "The Playboy Philosophy," *Playboy*, March 2017, 18.

With pride, Hefner describes the legacy of his father, noting, “we took gay rights to the Supreme Court and witnessed it rule in favor of same-sex marriage.”²⁰⁵

As *Playboy* remembers itself as an early gay liberationist, scholars, feminists, and, yes, *Playboy* readers should remain critical of the magazine’s politics and how they were formed. As this project shows, *Playboy*’s intentions were not noble or even consistent, but pieced together through a mess of now repudiated psychiatric theory that, contrary to what Connor Hefner would have his readers believe, was never truly used to include gay men in a vision of male sexual liberation. Hopefully, this project’s analysis of psychiatry’s role in justifying *Playboy*’s sexual liberation, creating their masculinity, and denigrating women contributes a small but salient refutation of the younger Hefner’s egregious claims to gay liberation, and, in a broader scope, sexual liberation for all. As an analysis of psychiatry reveals, *Playboy*’s sexual liberation really was just for straight men. Future scholarship could and should elaborate on this psychiatric critique, either by exploring *Playboy*’s later engagement of psychiatry or by looking beyond psychiatry to see how homophobic or not *Playboy* was in other areas, such as the law or religion.

In Connor Hefner’s March “Playboy Philosophy,” he notes the high stakes of the magazine’s liberation politics, ending with a dire warning for the need of *Playboy* during the Trump administration:

So let this stand as an introduction and a declaration that, regardless of our sexual orientation or political point of view, what we’re seeing in society has happened before and we all agree an attack on. . . on the LGBTQ community or on the First Amendment is in fact an attack on all our rights. And we should be ready to defend those rights at all costs on the intellectual battlefield.²⁰⁶

²⁰⁵Connor Hefner, “The Playboy Philosophy,” *Playboy*, March 2017, 18.

²⁰⁶Connor Hefner, “The Playboy Philosophy,” *Playboy*, March 2017, 18.

Scholars should take Hefner's declaration to heart, that what we're seeing- potential losses of civil liberties, attacks on oppressed groups- has happened before: a magazine called *Playboy*, masquerading as a high brow political manifesto crusading for the sexual liberation of all, but, actually, when the stakes were high and complicated, as they were with gay liberation and psychiatry, choosing the philosophy that most easily got more women naked.

In Foucault's *History of Sexuality*, he ends with a warning against Freud, that those who wholeheartedly embrace his theories as liberating might be overestimating his importance and failing to recognize that, while more sexually liberal than other politically useful institutions, he could still be used as an oppressive means of power in discourse. Foucault predicts that eventually, critics of Freud's sexually liberating psychiatry might no longer be viewed as simply succumbing to "the fears of an outmoded prudishness;" rather, Freudians may be seen as just as entrapping as other sexually repressive institutions.²⁰⁷ Likewise, scholars, especially those of the feminist variety, should heed Foucault's warning and apply it to Hugh Hefner, and now his son, to avoid taking their sexual liberationist label at face value. Just as Freud has lost his subversive social credibility over time, and has been recast as an influential and sexist madman himself, as Connor Hefner writes that, we "have entered a time when history is beginning to repeat itself," his father should be submitted to the same reevaluation.²⁰⁸

In his 1971 *Advocate* article on the "Playboy Panel" on homosexuality, Jim Kepner wrote:

²⁰⁷Michel Foucault, *History of Sexuality* (New York: Random House, 1978), 158.

²⁰⁸Connor Hefner, "The Playboy Philosophy," *Playboy*, March 2017, 18.

Whatever the panelists may have said in their original interviews, the panel was shaped by the 1950 spirit of “naughty” liberalism of *Playboy*. And hardly a word couldn’t as well have appeared in the magazine 20 years ago.²⁰⁹

Almost 50 more years later, Kepner’s statement is still true. Hefners publish philosophies consistent with 1950s sexual subversion, reimagine *Playboy* as a gay liberator, and, as always, women flaunt their bodies for the eyes of men. It is only time before we see Marilyn Monroe along with them, back where *Playboy* would say she belongs: printed on their pages, her body perfect forever in pictures, for men to enjoy and love and leer and own.

²⁰⁹Jim Kepner, “‘That Playboy panel’: Is it a boon or an insult?,” *The Advocate*, April 14-27, 1971.

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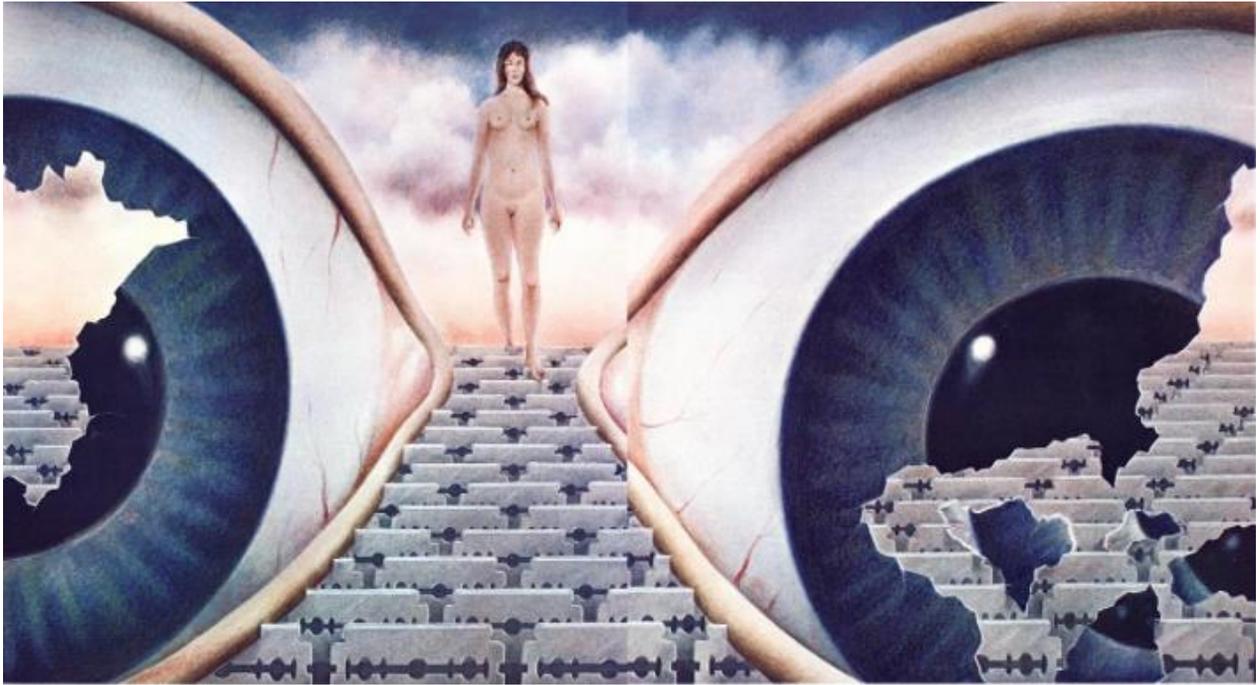
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Appendix



Appendix 1. Image created by Gervasio Gallardo, *Playboy*, November 1972. 148-149.