

SEXUAL ORIENTATION PERSPECTIVES OF INCARCERATED BISEXUAL AND GAY MEN: THE COUNTY JAIL PROTECTIVE CUSTODY EXPERIENCE

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This study examined sexual identity and perceptions of treatment by other prisoners and staff of incarcerated bisexual and gay men in special housing. Eigenberg's social constructionist model guided theoretical inquiry, and questions were derived from Wooden and Parker's survey. Although all inmates surveyed felt safer in protective custody than in general population, gay men were more likely to pressure bisexual and/or heterosexual offenders for sex while in protective custody. Bisexual offenders who preferred women to men more often sought protection from another inmate, reported more pressure from others to have sex, and felt less safe in jail than gay or bisexual men who preferred men over women. Sexual patterns tended to be indistinct for bisexuals, a factor that contributed to lower institutional adjustment and less satisfaction with regard to their sexual identity.

American society is becoming more diverse. Recognition of differences is at issue in almost every major institution in society, including correctional facilities. Researchers in the past decade have attempted to understand diversity within correctional institutions by studying disruptive groups (Fong, 1990; Fong, Vogel, & Buentello, 1992) and special-needs offenders such as long-term prisoners (Flanagan, 1991; Sabath & Cowles, 1990), elderly inmates (Flynn, 1992; Kratcoski & Babb, 1990), and offenders with mental or psychological disabilities (Conley, Luckasson, & Bouthilet, 1992; Jemelka, Rahman, & Trupin, 1993). Despite the increased attention to diversity issues in corrections, prisoners with alternative sexual preferences, such as gay and bisexual individuals, have been ignored or overlooked. One of the main reasons for neglecting gay and bisexual perspectives is unfamiliarity with and apprehension of the causes of sexual orientation.

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In her review of research conducted on the subject of homosexuality in male prisons, Eigenberg (1992) examines two philosophies used to classify sexual orientation and to explain the reason for homosexual behavior in men's prisons. These philosophies are the essentialist and the social constructionist perspectives.

THE ESSENTIALIST PERSPECTIVE

Most correctional studies on the subject of homosexuality in prison conducted prior to the early 1970s were found to be derived from an essentialist perspective (Eigenberg, 1992). The essentialist perspective had four assumptions: (a) Sexual identity was rigidly defined as either *normal* (heterosexuality) or *inappropriate* (bisexuality or homosexuality); (b) various heterosexual men in prison resorted to prison sex due to sexual deprivation; (c) most gay men were weak and "effeminate with respect to their appearance, behavior and mannerisms" (Eigenberg, 1992, p. 223); and (d) the distinction between rape and consensual homosexuality was ambiguous (Eigenberg, 1992, p. 225). Following the Kinsey (1948) studies, studies of male prison communities standardized heterosexual prisoner behavior, whereas gay men were considered "fags" or abnormal deviants with uncontrollable sexual urges (e.g., Kirkham, 1971; Sykes, 1958).

SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIONISM

Eigenberg (1992) demonstrated the erroneous and inaccurate assumptions of essentialism and suggested a move toward a "social constructionist" approach for conducting research. The social constructionist approach centered on a more complex view of prison sexuality, including how offenders defined their own sexual identities, the influence of preprison sexual behaviors on incarceration, the effect of prison on postrelease sexual behavior, and viewpoints from prisoners of various sexual orientations.

In the past 20 years, research that has examined adult men's prison sexuality has slowly moved away from the essentialist approach. Since 1980, different methodological approaches have been applied in the following three areas: (a) prisoner sexual behavior, particularly the rate at which sexual coercion and sexual assault occurred in men's prisons (Dumond, 1992; Nacci & Kane, 1983; Struckman-Johnson, Struckman-Johnson, Rucker, Bumby, & Donaldson, 1996; Tewksbury, 1989b; Wooden & Parker, 1982); (b) inmate emotions and coping mechanisms accompanying prison sexual victimization (Chonco, 1989; Jones & Schmid, 1989; Lockwood, 1985; Smith & Batiuk, 1989; Tewksbury, 1989a; Wooden & Parker, 1982); and (c) reactions

of correctional staff and/or officers toward prison sexual assault (Eigenberg, 1989; Nacci & Kane, 1984; Wooden & Parker, 1982).

After reviewing the literature on incarcerated gay men, two main drawbacks of the research in this area were apparent. Many studies were dated, and findings were specific to prison environments (Lockwood, 1985). For example, one of the most well-known studies of the viewpoints of gay men in prison was Wooden and Parker's (1982) research, which took place between 1979 and 1980 inside a 2,500-bed, medium-security penitentiary in California. Although two decades have passed since its inception, this study is still considered one of the leading research endeavors in the area of prison homosexuality. In addition to obtaining questionnaire responses from 200 general population prisoners and 13 correctional staff, Wooden and Parker obtained a quota sample of 80 gay men as well as 14 heterosexual men who had been raped or coerced into sexual activity. These men were asked about their sexual identities, sexual preferences, and how they were treated by staff and other inmates while in prison.

Drawing on Wooden and Parker (1982), this study attempts to address the following research questions:

1. Who are the men who have requested protective custody due to their alternative sexual preference?
2. What are the sexual preferences of these men while incarcerated in jail protective custody?
3. How do bisexual and gay men in protective custody perceive their treatment by others in the jail (e.g., jail staff members, jail inmates in general population, other bisexual gay inmates within their protective housing unit)?
4. How do bisexual and gay men in jail protective custody perceive they will be treated in prison?

To address these research questions, survey items were borrowed from Wooden and Parker's (1982) study of gay men in prison. These questions were adapted to fit the situation of bisexual and gay men incarcerated in protective custody of an urban county jail. The present study breaks with tradition in two specific ways. First, this study extends Eigenberg's (1992) social constructionist model to include men who have voluntarily defined themselves as bisexual or gay. By using gay and bisexual men as the focal point, the study moves away from the tradition of viewing the institution through the eyes of heterosexual prisoners. Second, this study collected data from men incarcerated in a special housing unit of an urban county jail. The jail environment is different from the medium- and maximum-security prisons where previous researchers conducted the bulk of their research (see Irwin, 1985).

METHOD

DATA COLLECTION

The men in the sample were brought to protective custody at their request because they felt unsafe in the general population due to their alternative sexual orientation. Some men reported no sexual victimization but felt that they might be harassed by others in the jail who knew of their sexual preference. Other men reported receiving threats of sexual victimization and were afraid for their safety. Some had actually been sexually victimized while in the general population.¹

In November of 1995, paper-and-pencil questionnaires were disseminated to 56 incarcerated men in a special housing unit of a large urban county jail. The questionnaire dissemination was part of a larger project involving a random sample of general population men and women in jail. Special permission was granted to administer the general population survey to the men separated in protective custody, with an addendum containing a selection of questions used in the study by Wooden and Parker (1982). The separate addendum asked questions about sexual identity, incarceration experiences, and treatment while in the protective custody section of the jail.² The general population survey and addendum were pretested with a random sample of 18 men and women in jail. Questions in the addendum asked respondents about the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with each item on a 4-point scale (*strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree*).

Once jail clearance had been established, the data collection method proceeded as follows. First, an inmate floor worker was located. The purpose of the visit, the background of the study, and the method of data collection were fully explained to the floor worker. Once initial rapport was established, the floor worker assisted the researcher in gaining the trust and participation of other inmates. This method of using a key informant to gain access to a group of individuals for which access would otherwise be more difficult has been effective at increasing participation rates in other studies (Adler, 1993; Whyte, 1955).

Men in specialized housing assignments were not mixed with men or women from the general population section of the jail. These men had requested special housing primarily to avoid physical and sexual victimization. Each one of three specialized housing areas consisted of a small dayroom, two showers, three toilets, and two telephones that connected to 10 cells, housing two men per cell for a maximum of 20 men per unit. The 20 men could interact with each other in the unit, as the cell doors were usually left open during the day.

There were 58 gay and bisexual men incarcerated together in these three specialized housing units. I obtained a response rate of 96.5% (56) for the general questionnaire and 74.1% (43) for the addendum. Of the men who agreed to complete the general questionnaire, 13 felt the questions in the addendum were too sensitive for their own comfort level.

SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS

Table 1 shows demographic characteristics of 56 gay and bisexual men in protective custody compared with a random sample of 447 men in the general population of the same jail. In comparison to the men in general population, the gay and bisexual men tended to be older and single or never married, and almost one half had no dependent children. Gay and bisexual men were indeed a diverse group of individuals; Caucasian men constituted the smallest ethnic category (14.8%), and African Americans composed the largest (44.4%) category. These men were similar in that they had all requested special housing to escape or avoid sexual harassment, victimization, and possibly rape.

A comparison of conviction histories and institutional time served revealed a strikingly similar institutional record overall. Both groups reported an average of two felony convictions, and about 50% of men in both groups had been to prison. A few minor differences are noteworthy. Gay and bisexual men in protective custody generally served less prison time than did men in general population. However, the protective custody men reported an average of four misdemeanor convictions and served more time in jail.

Table 1 also shows the differences between the sample of 56 gay and bisexual men and Wooden and Parker's (1982) 80 self-admitted gay men in prison. These data show that of the 56 men in jail, more were older and more were members of minority groups than were men in the prison group. Beyond age and race, little is known about the gay men in Wooden and Parker's study.

RESULTS

The 4-point scale was collapsed into two categories (*agree* and *disagree*) for the data analysis to facilitate comparison with Wooden and Parker's (1982) study. Tables 2, 3, 4, and 5 reveal percentages of gay and bisexual men in protective custody who agreed with statements with regard to sexual orientation, sexual preferences, treatment by others in jail, and perception of treat-

TABLE 1: Sample Characteristics

<i>Characteristic</i>	<i>Jail Sample (n = 56)</i>	<i>Random Sample of Men's General Population (n = 447)</i>	<i>Wooden and Parker's (1982) Sample (n = 80)</i>
Average age (years)	33	32	29
Age range (years)	19 to 61	17 to 76	20 to 51
Race/ethnicity (%)			
African American	44.4	47.4	46.0
Caucasian	14.8	26.4	33.0
Hispanic	35.2	21.8	21.0
Other	5.6	4.4	
Formal education (years)	11.6	11.0	
Marital/attachment status (%)			
Never married	67.9	44.4	
Married	11.3	27.2	
Separated/divorced	20.8	28.4	
Number of children (%)			
None	47.4	29.4	
One	21.1	25.3	
Two or more	31.6	45.3	
Past convictions			
Average number of misdemeanors	4	3	
Range of number of misdemeanors	0 to 20	0 to 50	
Average number of felonies	2	2	
Range of number of felonies	0 to 8	0 to 28	
Previous jail term (%)	85.2	84.8	
Average number of jail months	12.9	12.1	
Previous prison term (%)	50.9	48.1	33.4
Average number of prison months	34.6	40.1	
Waiting for prison transfer (%)	39.5	45.6	100

ment in prison. In Tables 2, 3, and 4, percentages of responses are listed by the men's self-identifications of sexual identity.³

There were 3 men who did not identify with either the gay or the bisexual categories. Based on their responses to survey questions, it is believed that these 3 men identified themselves as heterosexuals but were institutionally identified as homosexuals or "punks" and were specially housed because they had been victimized by other men in the general population. These 3 respondents were included only in the overall sample in the Row Total column in all tables, but, due to their small sample size, they were not included as a separate group.

TABLE 2: Perceptions of Sexual Identity (number in agreement)

Survey Question	Bisexual/ Heterosexual	Bisexual/ Gay	Gay	Row Total ^a (n = 43)	
	(n = 8)	(n = 14)	(n = 18)	No.	%
I am a homosexual/gay.	0	14	18	32	74.4
I am a bisexual.	8	14	0	22	51.2
I act more feminine than masculine.	0	4	9	13	30.2
I am happy with my sexual identity.	7	12	17	39	90.7
I would rather be straight.	3	3	2	11	26.2
I would rather be a female.	0	1	2	3	7.0
I would rather be more masculine.	3	0	0	5	11.6
I act differently in jail than I do in the free world.	4	10	7	23	53.5
On the streets I frequently dress in drag.	1	1	4	6	14.0

a. The respondents who identified themselves as heterosexual ($n = 3$) were included only in the overall sample in the Row Total column. These responses can be obtained by summing the first three columns of data and subtracting the sum from the Row Total.

TABLE 3: Sexual Preferences While Incarcerated (percentage in agreement)

Survey Question	Bisexual/ Heterosexual	Bisexual/ Gay	Gay	Row Total ^a (n = 43)	
	(n = 8)	(n = 14)	(n = 18)	No.	%
I prefer masculine bisexuals/ heterosexuals or gays for sexual partners in jail.	2	9	14	25	58.1
I prefer feminine bisexuals/gays for sexual partners in jail.	5	6	2	15	34.9
I always take the passive role when having sex.	0	9	17	26	60.5
I often have sex with someone for profit.	1	2	6	10	23.3
Most of my sexual partners in jail consider themselves to be straight.	0	0	9	10	23.8
Straight inmates who have sex with men in jail are denying their homosexuality.	8	12	17	40	93.0
I have more sex in jail than on the streets.	1	2	0	3	7.0
I have better sex in jail than on the streets.	1	3	1	5	11.6

a. The respondents who identified themselves as heterosexual ($n = 3$) were included only in the overall sample in the Row Total column. These responses can be obtained by summing the first three columns of data and subtracting the sum from the Row Total.

TABLE 4: Treatment by Other Persons in Jail (percentage in agreement)

<i>Survey Question</i>	<i>Bisexual/ Heterosexual (n = 8)</i>	<i>Bisexual/ Gay (n = 14)</i>	<i>Gay (n = 18)</i>	<i>Row Total^a (n = 43)</i>	
				<i>No.</i>	<i>%</i>
Bi/Homosexual inmates are treated with disrespect by inmates on other floors.	5	12	16	36	83.7
Deputies disrespect bi/homosexual inmates more than straight inmates.	7	14	15	39	90.7
Deputies tend to tolerate homosexual relationships between male inmates.	0	0	3	3	7.0
I am hooked up with an inmate who protects me in PC.	2	0	2	4	9.3
I get pressured a lot to have sex with other inmates in protective custody.	6	3	1	10	23.3
Sexual harassment happens often in this place.	1	2	9	13	31.7
Jail is a safer place to do time than prison.	2	7	9	20	47.6

NOTE: PC = protective custody.

a. The respondents who identified themselves as heterosexual ($n = 3$) were included only in the overall sample in the Row Total column. These responses can be obtained by summing the first three columns of data and subtracting the sum from the Row Total.

TABLE 5: Perceptions of Treatment by Others in Prison (percentage in agreement)

<i>Survey Question</i>	<i>First Time Going to Prison (n = 6)</i>	<i>Returning To Prison (n = 14)</i>	<i>Been to Prison but Not Going Now (n = 9)</i>	<i>Row Total^a (n = 29)</i>	
				<i>No.</i>	<i>%</i>
I worry about what prison will/would be like.	5	5	5	15	51.7
I'll probably be approached for sex if/when I get to prison.	3	7	8	18	62.1
I am afraid of being raped in prison.	5	5	1	11	38.0
Having a steady "man" is the safest way to do time in prison.	1	6	3	10	34.5
A steady "man" is likely to pimp a homosexual out later.	1	3	5	9	31.0

a. The total does not include men ($n = 14$) who are not going to prison on their current charge and have never been to prison before.

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Table 2 demonstrates that 22 men (51.2%) in this special housing unit defined themselves foremost as bisexual. Of these men, 8 specified a preference for women (bisexual/heterosexual), and 14 reported a preference for men (bisexual/gay). On the other hand, 18 men (41.9%) clearly defined themselves as gay. Finally, 3 men (7%) defined themselves as straight (neither bisexual nor gay).

Nearly all gay (94.4%) and bisexual (86.4%) men in jail were satisfied with their sexual identity. These percentages were higher than the percentage (76.3%) reported by prison inmates (Wooden & Parker, 1982). Gay men in protective custody of the jail were also less likely than bisexual men to want to "be straight" (heterosexual). Gay men comprised the group least likely of the three to alter the way they acted in jail. Some gay men reported dressing in drag (wearing women's clothes, cosmetics, etc.) outside as well as inside jail. On the other hand, bisexual men seemed to alter their conduct according to the situation—acting differently while incarcerated than when not in jail.

Gay men (50%) were more likely than bisexual/gay men (28.6%) to act more feminine than masculine. Bisexual/heterosexual men comprised the only group (37.5%) that reported not acting more feminine than masculine, and, in fact, the same percentage would rather be more masculine. A small percentage of men in the total jail sample (7%) would rather be female than male. This percentage was similar to Wooden and Parker's (1982) men in prison (12.5%).

SEXUAL PREFERENCES WHILE INCARCERATED

Table 3 illustrates sexual preferences of bisexual and gay men while in protective custody of the jail. More than one half (58.1%) of the entire sample preferred masculine sexual partners, and only 34.9% of the total sample expressed a preference for feminine partners. Wooden and Parker (1982) found that 88.8% of prison inmates preferred masculine sexual partners, and 12.5% preferred feminine sexual partners. Bisexual/heterosexual men, congruent to their sexual identity, overwhelmingly preferred feminine partners and did not take a passive role during sex. In fact, none of the bisexual men said their sexual partners in jail consider themselves to be heterosexual, whereas 9 gay men (50%) said their partners defined themselves as straight. Along these lines, most gay men (94.4%) reported always taking a passive role during sex in jail.

Nearly one fourth (23.8%) of the total sample—gay men more often than bisexuals—engaged in sex for profit (commissary, favors, etc.) in protective

custody. Wooden and Parker (1982) also found more (35%) gay prison inmates engaged in sex for profit. Most bisexual and gay men (93%) in jail reported that of the straight inmate partners they did or do have, these men are simply in denial of their own homosexuality.

Only 3 bisexual men (7%) and no gay men reported having more sex in jail (as compared with 23.8% in Wooden and Parker's [1982] prison study) than they did when not incarcerated. Only 5 men (11.6%) of the total sample (compared with 13.7% in Wooden and Parker's study) had "better sex" in jail than on the streets.

TREATMENT IN JAIL

Table 4 reports the perceptions—as bisexual and gay men in protective custody—of treatment by others. The survey asked how bisexual and gay men were treated by general population inmates, deputies and/or staff, and other bisexual and/or gay inmates within their housing unit.

A full 83.7% of the total sample (77.5% in Wooden and Parker's [1982] study) felt that other inmates treated bisexual and gay men with disrespect. Gay men in jail were the most vocal (88.9%) about disrespect from other inmates, but 16.7% felt that jail deputies and/or staff tolerated gay relationships between inmates in the special housing unit. In contrast, none of the bisexual men felt that deputies tolerated displays of gay behavior in the special housing unit. Almost all (90.7%) bisexual and/or gay men felt deputies disrespected their group more than inmates in the general population.

In Wooden and Parker's (1982) study, fewer prisoners (42.5%) felt that prison staff disrespected them more than inmates in the general population. This may be partially explained by the fact that more prisoners in the 1982 study (58.7%) felt that staff tolerated gay behavior in prison, compared to the present study.

Bisexual/heterosexual inmates more often used protection of another inmate (25%), reported more pressure to have sex (37.5%), and felt less safe in jail than in prison (37.5%) than did bisexuals/gay men and gay men. The figures for the total jail sample are much lower than Wooden and Parker's (1982) study. In prison, 87.5% of bisexuals and gay men were protected by other inmates, and 52.5% were often pressured to have sex. This is compared to 9.3% and 20.9% of jail inmates, respectively.

TREATMENT IN PRISON

Table 5 reveals protective custody inmates' perceptions of future treatment in prison, separated by whether jail offenders are anticipating transfer

to prison on their current charges. Men who had never been to prison before and also were not anticipating going to prison on their current charges ($n = 14$) were excluded from the analysis. Of our sample, 6 men were going to prison for the first time, 14 were returning to prison, and 9 had been to prison before but were not going on their current charges. More than one half of the men in the sample worry about what prison will be like and believe they will be tested by another inmate and pressured to have sex. These anxieties do not seem to decrease for men who have been to prison before. One third of bisexual and gay men (38%) are fearful of being raped when they get to prison, especially those who will experience prison for the first time.

To contend with this anticipated confrontation in prison, 10 out of 29 men believe that having a steady "man" (an aggressive heterosexual who does not consider himself to be gay) is the safest way to do time. The group that was most likely to agree with this statement had been to prison before. Yet, the same number of men also reported the "steady protector" will later victimize the same person he is paid to protect by advertising sexual services to other inmates and using the "protected" as a prostitute. Although not reported in Table 5, most inmates agreed protective custody was the safest way to do time in any institution.

DISCUSSION

It has only been in recent times that special housing has been given to prisoners who feel that their sexual orientation may pose or has already posed a threat to their safety while incarcerated. Although special housing options are more abundant in larger institutions and criminal justice systems, research access to protective custody prisoners is limited. The attitudes, behaviors, and perceived treatment of gay and bisexual male prisoners in protective custody in a large urban jail were studied using a social constructionist approach.

According to the data from the present study, gay men in protective custody were more likely than bisexual men to be satisfied with their sexual identities, despite the data that also show gay men to be most likely to experience (or recognize) sexual harassment. Satisfaction with being gay is supported by data that show that incarcerated gay men were the least likely of the three groups to alter the way they acted in jail. These results are consistent with Wooden and Parker's (1982) research on gay and bisexual men incarcerated in the prison general population.

In comparison with the more self-assured gay men, bisexual men seemed to alter their conduct according to the situation. Bisexual men reported being

more sexually reserved while incarcerated than when not in jail. The reason for this is that sexual patterns were more vague for bisexuals than for gay men, a factor that may have contributed to lower institutional adjustment and happiness for bisexual men. Findings suggest that of the three groups, bisexual men who preferred women over men seemed the most fearful about the incarceration experience and the most troubled about their own sexual identities. This confirms other studies outside the walls that found bisexuals had more problems with self-esteem and adjustment than gay men (Paul, 1983). This seems to be due in part to the supportive friendship network within the gay subculture and the lack of social support for bisexuals (Richardson, 1987).

Two main findings of the current study departed from Wooden and Parker's (1982) study of prison sexual orientations and behaviors. First, as a percentage of the general population, there were more bisexuals and gay men in protective custody in jail than in Wooden and Parker's prison study. This was most likely due to the option for gay and bisexual men to receive protective custody while in jail, an option which was seldom available in the past. Bisexual and gay inmates in Wooden and Parker's study were housed with the general population.

The second difference was the definition and classification of bisexuality in the two studies. The present study distinguishes a difference among heterosexuals, gay men, bisexuals who preferred women over men, and bisexuals who preferred men over women. Wooden and Parker (1982), on the other hand, viewed bisexual men who preferred men over women as passive and more similar to "functional" gay men. Bisexual men who preferred women over men were seen as more similar to aggressive heterosexual "jockers," who were heterosexual men who assumed the dominant role when having sex with other men but did not consider themselves to be bisexual or gay.

Data from the present study suggest that the sexual activity that occurred in the special housing units in the jail was overall less physically coercive than that reported in prison (see Chonco, 1989; Dumond, 1992; Jones & Schmid, 1989; Lockwood, 1985; Struckman-Johnson et al., 1996). Current findings indicate one third of bisexual and gay inmates felt pressured to have sex with other inmates in the special housing unit. Some protective custody jail inmates even had protection from other special housing inmates, but clearly to a lesser extent than reported in prison (Smith & Batiuk, 1989; Tewksbury, 1989a, 1989b).

Bisexual/heterosexual men in jail typically assumed the role of the masculine/dominant partner, and gay men took a passive role during the actual sex act. However, the social meaning of these roles was different here than in other research. Although past institutional research has equated a submissive

role during the sex act with a passive personality and has reported that the dominant partner is the one who pressures the passive partner, the current study differentiates the social interaction that takes place before the sex act from the roles taken during sex. In the special housing unit, the dominant bisexual/heterosexual inmates more often used protection of another inmate, reported more pressure placed on them to have sex, and felt less safe in jail than in prison, when compared with the other two groups. It appears, therefore, that bisexual/heterosexual males are being pressured to have sex by submissive gay men and bisexual/gay men in the special housing unit designed to protect offenders from one another. The pressure by the passive gay male partner (in most cases) on the dominant bisexual/heterosexual male partner to have sex may be a function of the conditions of the special housing unit.

The conditions that may have contributed to the nature of sexual pressure and the need to seek protection were the ratio of gay and bisexual/gay men to bisexual/heterosexual men. The largest groups were gay ($n = 18$) and bisexual/gay men ($n = 14$). Both of these two groups more likely considered themselves to be more feminine, but at the same time, they preferred masculine sexual partners. Because there were only 8 bisexual/heterosexual men who considered themselves to be more masculine, they were more often sought after for sex by the other two groups. Thus, being the aggressor and pressurer for sex has more to do with availability and numbers of desirable partners and very little to do with actual roles played during sex. In the general population, the number of men who consider themselves more masculine clearly outweighs the men who consider themselves to be more feminine. Thus, the feminine men are more desirable sexual partners and thus need to seek protection in the general population. Does the role of passive men change from victim to aggressor once they are removed from general population and placed in protective custody? Because sexual harassment and other forms of sexual pressure have the potential to escalate into violent institutional conflict that threatens the safety of prisoners and institutional workers (Lockwood, 1985), these relationships merit further inquiry.

Institutional responsibilities and sound strategic responses to sexual victimization have been outlined and elaborated on by a number of researchers to include prevention, intervention, and prosecution (Cotton & Groth, 1984; Dumond, 1992; Wooden & Parker, 1982). With hate crimes on the rise, especially those targeting gay and bisexual individuals, the men in this study are all potential targets of harassment, assault, and even death. Data in the study indicated that in comparison to heterosexual men, gay and bisexual men in jail perceived that they were afforded less respect by other male inmates in the general population. Gay and bisexual men also felt less supported by jail

staff members. Gay and bisexual offenders will continue to suffer degradation above that of inmates in general population as long as inadequate resources and lack of staff support continue to exist. Institutional programs must be adequately equipped to address sexual harassment, victimization, and/or aggression of offenders, giving priority to those in protective custody for these problems.

Future studies on sexual orientation of prisoners could use the incarceration experience to test the proposed idea that sexual orientation may change over time, depending on individual circumstance or predisposition (Richardson, 1987). One circumstance that may change sexual orientation is short- or long-term incarceration in jail or prison. Using this strategy, sexual orientation should be considered a continuous variable (see Ellis, Burke, & Ames, 1987; Kinsey, Pomeroy, & Martin, 1948; Kinsey, Pomeroy, Martin, & Gebhard, 1953; Klein, 1990; Shively, Jones, & De Cecco, 1984).

NOTES

1. The men in the sample were brought to protective custody of their own volition if they had reported receiving threats of sexual victimization and were afraid for their safety or if they had been sexually victimized and reported the incident. It is likely that some men in the jail general population had been sexually victimized but chose not to report the incident or chose not to go into protective custody. This study did not examine all bisexual and gay men in jail—only the bisexual and gay men who requested protective custody.

2. The findings of the study are limited to protective custody bisexual and gay inmates because the survey addendum was not administered to general population inmates. The participants of the survey addendum were informed ahead of time that they should answer all questions about their protective custody experience. Of the inmate participants, 4 or 5 privately discussed their perceptions of doing time as gay or bisexual men in the general population versus protective custody section of the jail.

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