

The American Game Of "Smear The Queer" And The Homosexual Compo- nent Of Male Competitive Sport And Warfare

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One of the principal methodological difficulties in applying psychoanalytic theory to anthropological data concerns validation. How does one know that a prospective insight gained from interpreting an element of a particular culture psychoanalytically is valid? Far too often, readers are simply asked to accept on faith that a given interpretation is sound. Presumably if the reader shares the psychoanalytic bias of the initial interpreter, he will agree with the interpretation; if he does not, he will disagree. This is not a satisfactory state of affairs. Surely if a psychoanalytic perspective does yield new insights in the study of culture, it ought to be possible to demonstrate the authenticity and accuracy of such insights—even to individuals who may be unfamiliar with psychoanalytic theory or who may be downright hostile to it.

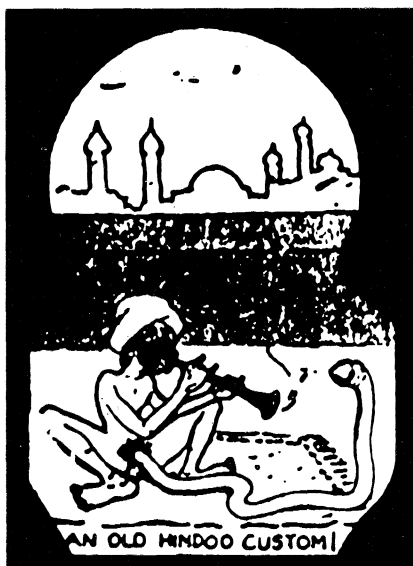
The methodological issue in question is a serious one and so long as it is avoided, the reputation of psychoanalytic anthropology among mainstream social scientists will continue to be low. Here is where the materials of folklore offer the psychoanalytic anthropologist an unrivalled opportunity to confront the validation problem. Folklore as a form of autobiographical ethnography provides an emic as opposed to etic set of symbolic equivalences (Dundes, 1980). Freud himself drew attention to the remarkable nature of folkloristic data in the tenth lecture "Symbolism in Dreams" in his *A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis*:

"How do we profess to arrive at the meaning of these dream-symbols, about which the dreamer himself can give us little or no information? My answer is that we derive our knowledge from widely different sources: from fairy tales and myths, jokes and witticisms, from folklore, i.e., from what we know of the manners and customs, sayings and songs, of different peoples, and from poetic and colloquial usage of language." (1953:166)

Freud actually demonstrated how to use folkloristic data to illuminate symbolic equivalents in a paper jointly written with Viennese classicist D.E. Oppenheim in 1911. The paper was unfortunately for all intents and purposes lost until it was discovered in the possession of Oppenheim's daughter who was living in Australia. It was finally published under the title *Dreams in Folklore* in 1958. In this important essay, Freud shows how symbolic equations as reported or explicated in dreams which occur in folktales correspond exactly to the "Freudian" interpretations of everyday dreams. In other words, much of Freud's interpretation of dream symbols upon examination turns out to articulate symbolic equations already in some sense "known" by the folk. One apt summary of this view claims "Freud's contribution as far as symbols are concerned is to be regarded as rediscovery laboriously acquired through intellectual analysis, of something which previously was—and in other cultures still is—given knowledge" (Vanggaard, 1972:14). One could, of course, argue that both Freudian interpretations and folk symbolic equations are "wrong," but the striking congruence of analytic and folk constructions remain to be explained.

Dozens of explicit or overt symbolic equations in folklore are readily available. One such illustrative instance is the alleged phallic symbolism of snakes. Pioneer psychoanalytic anthropologist Weston La Barre devoted some three chapters of his superb study of snake-handling cults in the United States to serpent symbolism in Africa, the Near East and elsewhere (1962:53-109). His analytic accounts of the genital and phallic significance of the snake in a variety of cultural contexts are certainly persuasive, but scholars with a strong bias against psychoanalytic theory could try to ignore La Barre's erudite arguments. It might not be so easy to ignore the following versions of a folk cartoon which has been circulated in the United States for many decades. I shall present more than one version of the item to demonstrate that it is indeed traditional inasmuch as it appears in multiple and variant form. (The first version was collected in 1974 in Oakland, the second comes from the Kinsey Institute for Sexual Research at Indiana University with no date indicated. The third version as its caption suggests was collected in Tennessee in 1977. The fourth version comes from the Kinsey Instituted and is dated 1964;

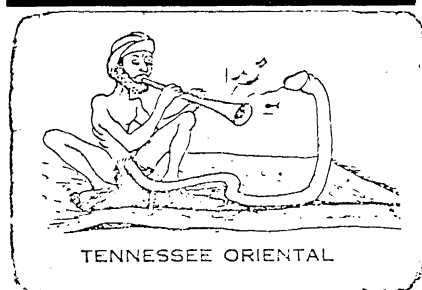
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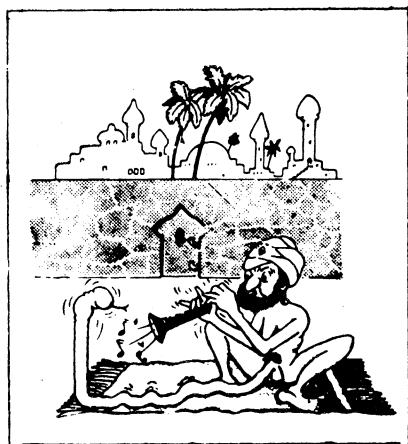
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An Old Hindoo Custom!

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TENNESSEE ORIENTAL



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AN OLD HINDOO CUSTOM

and the fifth version was collected in San Francisco and bears no date.) Regardless of any effect a flute might really have on a snake's behavior, the occurrence of the flute in the cartoon may itself have symbolic meaning. In American folk speech, "to play the skin flute" refers to male masturbation. Thus playing the flute to arouse a "snake" is not a custom foreign to American culture—despite the apparent foreign setting of the cartoon figure in India. It is hard to imagine that anyone seeing these three variants of a common American folk cartoon could possibly deny that a snake can serve as a phallic image!

Let me give another illustration of how folklore data can 'validate' a hypothetical symbolic equation. Psychoanalysts have suggested that the pulling of teeth can represent a symbolic form of castration (Freud, 1938:924,n.1; Darlington, 1929; Kanner, 1928). Those unfamiliar with psychoanalysis normally find this symbolic equation farfetched. Yet the following folk cartoon confirms in no uncertain terms the symbolic association of tooth extraction and castration. There seems little doubt that this symbolic equation plays some part in the excessive fear that some males have in visiting their dentist (plus the fear of having their oral cavity "penetrated" by the novocaine needle and the drill). (The first version from the Kinsey Institute was deposited there by the author during his graduate student days in Bloomington, Indiana, in 1960, while the second version was collected in San Francisco in 1971.)

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I should like to further illustrate a way in which folkloristic data can be utilized to support or corroborate a hypothetical symbolic equation derived from psychoanalytic anthropology. In a previous essay (1978), I sought to show how American football represented a form of homosexual ritual combat in which males prove their masculinity at the expense of other males, namely, by feminizing them. The objective of American football could be summarized as trying to get into one's opponent's end-zone more times than he gets into one's own endzone. Response to the essay included various sorts of outrage—including written death threats. (As anthropologists work more and more in societies where their informants may read the results of their research, the recording and analysis of informant responses to published research will become increasingly important.) Two different groups who applauded the study each had their own vested interests. Gays liked the implication that supposedly "straight" American males as exemplified by macho football players were acting out a homosexual battle; feminists rightly saw in the analysis a confirmation of their own view that "Losers" in American culture were depicted in the role of passive, receiving, put upon, "female" individuals. But the principal objection made by critics of the essay was the question of validation. How did I know that American football was an unconscious homosexual struggle for supremacy? Could I "prove" my allegations?

In my original essay, I presented abundant evidence from folk speech to indicate the sexual nature of the sport. One spoke commonly of the "deepest penetration" yet into an opponent's territory, and there were frequent cheers from fans exhorting their team to "go all the way" and to "score." The term "pass" can also have sexual nuance as confirmed by the folk epigram: Old football players never die, they just keep on making passes. These terms normally applicable to conventional heterosexual relations were in football applied to relations between *males only*. I was not suggesting that football players were homosexuals or that football fans were homosexuals. There is a difference between being a homosexual and engaging in homosexual behavior—just as there is a difference between being an alcoholic and taking a drink at a bar or a cocktail party.

I might have made clearer the fact that I was commenting upon a feature of American culture in which physical contact between males is discouraged. For example, in the United States, men can dance with women; women can dance with women, but men cannot dance with other men (unless a socially sanctioned folk dance, e.g., borrowed from Greece, provides an outlet for such behavior). Again, men can kiss women in public; women can kiss women in public, but few American men are comfortable kissing other men in public. Football, like some

other sports, afforded American males the opportunity to touch and embrace one another. I was not arguing that football was unhealthy. If anything is unhealthy, it would be the society which makes it taboo for males to enjoy any kind of physical intimacy. One does not normally pat a male colleague on his buttocks to show approbation or affection except in the context of a football game. I do not intend to rehearse more of my argument here. The interested reader should consult the original essay if he wishes further details. The sole question I am raising now is that of validating my symbolic interpretation of American football. Even those relatively few individuals who indicated they agreed with my interpretation could not offer any additional evidence. They just somehow felt or knew I was right in what I said about American football. But that kind of consensus hardly constitutes scientific data.

Let us consider briefly an American folk game in which a ball (not necessarily a football) is thrown into the air, typically in a schoolyard. In this boys' game, the person who catches the ball would be set upon by all the other players. The person with the ball might try to run evasively so as to avoid the host of would-be tacklers. When the ball carrier is eventually tackled, he had to release the ball by "fumbling" or he might throw it up again into the air which would initiate a new free-for-all. The "rules" for this game are relatively simple and the game is not one taught officially by school authorities. It is nevertheless fairly common—it is played all over the United States where it is known under a variety of names. These include: Kill the guy (man) with the ball; Kill the carrier, Kill the quarterback, Kill the ham, Kill the dill, Spill the pill, Trip the dip. However, by far the most popular name of the game is "Smear the Queer." The homosexual reference is loud and clear. Even some of the other alternative names reflect this, e.g., Cream the queen, Bag the Fag, Tag the fag, and Smear butt.

The curious part of the game is that the longer one held on to the ball, the more manly one was. So it was only by assuming the role or slot of the "queer" that one could demonstrate one's masculinity. Anyone demonstrating masculinity was a threat to the other boys—presumably since that individual's masculinity was understood to be at the other's expense. Hence the objective of the game for all except the ball carrier was to chase, grab, wrestle the queer and relieve him of the ball. It is noteworthy that it was at once desirable to be the queer—the queer was the "lucky" person who caught the ball—and dangerous—one had to run for one's life if one were the queer.

The game is played by relatively young boys—elementary school up to junior high school. Boys as young as eight or nine play it. Occasionally, the game might begin during a lull or break in another game. For example, if during a conventional game of handball, an unpopular boy momentarily had possession of the ball, one of the other players might

suddenly yell "Smear the Queer" and all the others would join in an attempt to gangtackle the "victim." As the boys were aware of the homosexual meaning of the word "queer," it would appear that the game reflects part of the socialization process from a peer group with respect to attitudes towards homosexuality.

What is the relevance of this game to my analysis of American football? In one of the few references to the game in print, it is referred to as "folk football." According to Knapp and Knapp (1976:43), "In Murder Ball, or Smear the Queer, a player kicks or lobs the ball high into the air and everyone pursues whoever catches it." Other informants agree that "Smear the Queer" seems to be a form of football and such alternative names as "Kill the Quarterback" confirm the connection.

This folk game surely suggests a verbally explicit connection between football and homosexuality. The critical clue is the name of the game: Smear the Queer. It is absolutely impossible to deny the homosexual connotations of such a name. What we have here is a piece of folkloristic data which reveals a symbolic equation, namely that jumping on a boy with a ball is labelled by the folk as smearing the queer, that is, attacking a homosexual. It seems to me that this does provide a type of validation of my earlier analysis of football as homosexual combat.

There is other relevant evidence from folklore. Let me cite one version of a popular joke. It was collected in a Gay bar in San Francisco in 1979 although other versions were reported in non-homosexual contexts.

There was this football player. And he wanted to get in one of those fancy frats [fraternities], you know, and he was the typical football player with the typical up-the-butt attitude, and of course the frat accepted him . . . on the condition that he pass their test. Their test was that he would have to spend an evening in a gay bar. "Well," he thought, "I suppose it won't be so bad, nobody would bother a football player like me anyway." Well, they told him he'd be watched to make sure he was havin' a good time, Ha, Ha, and soon the time came for the big evening. The football player went into the gay bar and sat down at the bar where there was no-one else sittin' 'cause he was nervous an' everything, and after a while he calmed down 'cause nobody was accosting him. But sure enough, in comes this queer like the cement out of a dump truck and sits himself right next to the football player, who is obviously disturbed. But, as football players are, this one became rude after realizing the queer wasn't gonna do anything to him, so he began bumpin' the queer's arm every time he tried to sip his drink. Eventually, the queer got mad, and turned to the football player and said, "I bet you play football, huh?"

The player answered, "Yeah, what about it, faggot?"

"I bet I can play football better than you can."

This made the football player mad, 'cause this queer was challenging him on a weak point.

Then the queer said, "Come on, baby dontcha got any balls?" He then called over the bartender, and the bartender brought him a huge pitcher of beer. The queer took the beer and downed it with one slug. Then he turned to the football player and said, "Queers six, football players, nothing." Then the queer got off his barstool, bent over, took down his pants, and let out a fart that musta killed all the old ladies within a block of the bar. And he said, "Queers seven, football players, nothing."

The football player was a bit surprised 'cause this wasn't exactly what he'd had in mind, but he knew he was being watched, so he had no choice but to defend his honor. So he called over the bartender who brought the beer and he downed the beer just as fast as the queer did. He turned to the queer and said, "Queers seven, football player, six." Then he got off his chair, pulled down his pants, bent over, and just as he was about to blow gas, the queer whipped out his cock, shoved it into the football player's asshole, and shouted, "BLOCK THAT KICK, BLOCK THAT KICK!!"

In other versions of this standard joke, the touchdown is scored by belching rather than by drinking beer, but the extra point is invariably a farting contest which allows for the same punchline in all the versions. Many important themes are contained in this text: the desire of the football player to join an all-male fraternity, the peer group's observation of the initiate in a blatant homosexual context, and the final submission to sodomy. It is reminiscent of initiation rites in aboriginal Australia, New Guinea, and elsewhere in which younger men are subjected to active homosexual anal intercourse by older members of the male group (Dundes, 1976). In any event, there is a parallel to the game of "Smear the Queer" insofar as a football player attempting to prove his masculinity is subjected to attack. It thus offers additional "folk" support for my analysis of American football.

The allusion to blocking a kick also suggests a possible clarification of the curious custom of football fans beginning a postgame victory celebration by tearing down their own team's goalposts (or in basketball the basketball hoop and net). If we assume that the goalposts represent a kind of entrance to the endzone—and it is certainly true that so-called "extra points" following a touchdown as well as three point field goals must be kicked between the uprights, then removing the goalposts may symbolize the end of possible penetrations by the enemy team. Without the goalposts in place, the enemy would be rendered impotent, unable to kick the ball into one's "endzone."

Having found further confirmation from folklore of the homosexual component of American football, we may very briefly examine some other male sports. American football is but one manifestation of an underlying paradigm which affords males in many cultures an opportunity to indulge in homosexual combat. Soccer, perhaps the most

popular male sport in Europe and Latin America has been successfully analyzed in this light (Suarez-Orozco, 1982:15-24) with the help of quotations from traditional chants and song texts with explicit homosexual content. Again, the folklore associated with the sport makes overt references to homosexuality. In a study of rugby, we find that one of the bawdy songs traditional in rugby circles has as its chorus (Sheard and Dunning, 1973:15):

For we're all queers together For we're all queers together,
Excuse us while we go upstairs That's why we go round in pairs.

This verse, typically sung to the tune of the Eton Boating Song, is an apparent celebration of homosexuality. It has been suggested (Sheard and Dunning, 1973:14) that the obscene songs which are traditionally enjoyed by rugby clubs serve "to mock homosexuals and homosexuality" but this ignores the possible pleasure in acting out homosexual behavior which would make the songs much more than simply a matter of ridiculing homosexuality. The same false argument could be made with "Smear the Queer" that it is only a means of poking fun at homosexuals, but that would not explain why one took pleasure in being "it" in such a game and in proving one's masculinity by withstanding the attacks from one's peers.

Once the underlying homosexual paradigm has been identified, it becomes considerably easier to understand much of the behavior associated with male sports. For example, in an extended discussion of the rowdy actions of British soccer fans, it is observed that the chants directed by them at the opposing team imply "that the enemy is unmanly, effeminate, or actually female. Goalkeepers have to suffer the accusation that they are homosexuals" (Marsh and Harre, 1978:65). To the extent that it is the goalkeepers who so to speak are the ones scored upon, who are penetrated, it makes sense to consider them (passive) homosexuals.

In the light of the paradigm, one can profitably examine almost any male competitive sport. In basketball, for instance, the objective is to shoot the ball through the enemy's hoop (which normally has a net "skirt" attached). The hoop is attached to the "backboard." The sexual content of basketball is signalled by a piece of folklore, a joking question dating at least back to the 1940s: Why couldn't the basketball player's wife have children? Because he always dribbles before he shoots. Dribble is, of course, a technical term in basketball referring to bouncing and controlling the ball with one hand while walking or running with the ball at the same time (Frommer, 1979:49). The joke implies some sort of heterosexual inadequacy, perhaps premature ejaculation. The sexual equation of "shooting" and ejaculation is overt. But in basketball—as in other male competitive ball games—the opponent is male, not female.

One wonders about such folk speech terms as "back door" (referring to a situation in which a player on offense takes a position behind the defense under his own basket to receive a pass—back door is also homosexual slang for anus) or a "rim shot" (referring to a ball which strikes the basket's circular metal frame—rim is a standard item of homosexual slang for anilingus (Rodgers, 1972:172) or "swish" (referring to a ball's passing through the hoop without touching the rim—swish is a standard term for a passive homosexual (Rodgers, 1972:192). Perhaps the occurrence of terms like back door, rim, and swish in both basketball and homosexual slang is merely coincidence. But the paradigm suggests otherwise. One of the most devastating and spectacular shots in basketball is the so-called "slam dunk"—also termed a "stuff" in which the ball is literally forced or crammed through the hoop. One gets no extra points or credit for stuffing or slam dunking the ball. However, the opposing team and its fans no doubt feel it to be especially humiliating. It is precisely analogous to the symbolic function of the "spike" in American football which similarly serves to prolong or accentuate the moment of penetration by the team on offense. The defensive team and all that team's supporters must endure the disgrace of taking the offensive thrust without offering any resistance. A more conventional desirable shot is the "lay-up" or "lay-in" in which a player drives towards the hoop and if not impeded can simply "lay" the ball in the hoop. "Lay" is a standard term for intercourse (usually heterosexual). The question is why should a standard term for heterosexual intercourse be used in basketball, a game initially played by males only? The answer is that the game is a (homo)sexual battle with the male loser forced to occupy a "female" position.

One element in male sports which is as obvious as the sexual component is war imagery. Most male competitive sports make little or no effort to conceal the frequent allusions to violence and aggression. In American football, one refers to a line—the seven men who make it possible for the other four to move the ball forward. In warfare, one speaks of battle lines. When an offensive line and a defensive line in a football game are pretty evenly matched, a radio play-by-play commentator may refer to a "war" down in the "trenches." A "blitz" refers to a sudden, furious mass attack on the enemy quarterback while a "bomb" is a long forward pass made by a quarterback (Frommer, 1979:89). So it would not be unfair to characterize games such as American football as resembling warfare. Football terminology may even be consciously aping military usage as in the term "platoon" for a unit trained especially for offensive or defensive (Frommer, 1979:100). In professional football, if the game ends in a tie, there is a "sudden death" extra period of play. The first team to score wins. If a football game can end with sudden

death, it would seemingly be analogous to war!

But if games are like war, so is war like games. One even refers to "war games" when military maneuvers are engaged in during peace time. There is striking evidence confirming the metaphorical equivalence of games and warfare. Fussell speaks (1975:25) of the "classic equation between war and sport," remarking that "One way of showing the sporting spirit was to kick a football toward the enemy lines while attacking" (1975:25, 27). He cites several documented instances of this practice during World War I engagements against the Germans in July, 1916, and the Turks in November, 1917.

If games and war are structural or functional equivalents, and if the homosexual battle paradigm applies to the latent content of competitive games, then it may well apply as well to war. This would explain why governments (dominated by males) are so reluctant to allow women in the armed forces. If women are inducted into the armed services, it is more or less understood that they will not be permitted to participate in actual combat. (They are rather expected to serve in auxiliary capacities behind the lines.) If warfare, like male competitive sports, is a thinly disguised homosexual struggle for supremacy, then it is easy to understand why there is so much resistance (by males) to the idea of women fighting on the front lines. An exclusively male homosexual ritual has no place for women. Moreover, in male chauvinist terms, it would constitute a risk of losing one's honor if one's women were on the front line inasmuch as the women could be exposed to direct assaults and possible penetration by the "weapons" of one's enemies. Women are just as unwelcome on battle lines as they are on men's teams playing professional football or basketball.

The inordinate fear of homosexuality in the armed services—for years it has constituted grounds for immediate dismissal from a service—with an undesirable discharge—may now be more comprehensible. I can still remember a "canned" lecture delivered to me and a host of other Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps midshipmen on the deck of the U.S.S. Juneau in the summer of 1954. A crusty old Lieutenant tried to warn us about the dangers of what he termed "dabbling." One must be careful, he said, in the shower not to engage in any activity which might be construed as dabbling and so forth. Such an accusation could well put an end to a promising career. At the end of some thirty minutes on the subject, the speaker paused and said he would be glad to answer any questions we might have although he was admittedly no expert. One wiseacre voice from our midst remarked, "Yeah, he just dabbles" evoking a ripple of tension-reducing laughter.

The Navy has always been worried about homosexuality—maybe even more than the other branches of the military in view of the sometimes

long period at sea which guaranteed total isolation from contact with members of the opposite sex. (Sexual segregation in prison almost invariably produces homosexual relationships.) A variant of a classic joke, reported by Legman (1975:144-145) distinguishes the Army and the Navy in this regard:

"Saint Peter gave wings to a soldier and a sailor entering Paradise, with the proviso that they would drop off if the wearer had a dirty thought. Proud of their wings, the two men started walking smartly down the golden streets naked. A naked female angel passed coyly by, glancing at them, and the soldier's wings fell off. He looked and saw the sailor's still secure, so he shamefacedly bent over to pick up his wings. As he stooped, the sailor's wings fell off."

The overt and covert homosexual impulses found among single sex military groups has long been known. Fussell's illuminating chapter "Soldier Boys" describes in detail what he calls homoeroticism among World War I English soldiers with much supporting evidence from their biographical and literary reminiscences (1975:270-309). Yet despite Fussell's perceptive insight that the language of warfare—"assault, impact, thrust, penetration" has sexual nuances, he seems to limit his consideration of homosexual tendencies to the English, failing to see that if (1) the language of warfare is sexual, and (2) the participants in warfare are essentially exclusively male, then warfare, like football, presumably represents in part a ritualized form of homosexual combat.

It is dangerous to speculate about the underlying psychology of so complex a phenomenon as war which clearly has economic and political causal factors. Yet it is tempting to see a kind of continuum from struggles for dominance among primates (in which weaker males may show subordinate status by presenting their rumps to higher ranking males) through competitive sports (in which the weaker team is feminized by being scored upon by the stronger team) ending with warfare. It should be noted incidentally that many zoologists and primatologists emphatically deny that blatant sexuality of male animals mounting other males (or female animals mounting other females). In a chapter entitled "Apparent Homosexual Behavior," ethologist Wolfgang Wickler, while admitting that it is sometimes difficult to decide whether a given act among animals can be construed as homosexual behavior, suggests that such activities are very probably a struggle to assert dominance. "From what we have already said it becomes clear that when male baboons mount each other, this need not be homosexual behavior but could also be a demonstration of rank. When a subordinate male assumes the role of the female in fact of the victor, because this role is also a sign of submission, we are dealing once again with a demonstration of rank and not with homosexuality" (1973:46-48). The question is obviously begged as to why overt sexual positions are assumed to demonstrate rank. Rank can be

achieved through other means, e.g., threatening gestures, growling sounds, etc. One could argue that zoologists' unwillingness to label male baboons mounting other male baboons who "assume the role of female" as homosexual behavior is a form of denial. The denial is part of the same cultural pattern which compels men to express their homosexual tendencies in such "safe" symbolic forms as football and warfare. If one empirically observes baboons, it is the sexual act which is explicit in contrast to the labelling of such behavior as signs of "rank" or "dominance" which appear to depend upon the subjective interpretative judgment of the human observer.

Leaving aside the question of whether primate same sex mounting constitutes bona fide homosexuality, what can we say about the possible homosexual underpinnings of human warfare? If there is any sort of isomorphism between conceptions of the body and of one's home state or nation, one could argue that the invasion of one's homeland by an enemy constituted a kind of penetration of one's perimeter. During the establishment of an enemy beachhead on one's shores or being attacked by paratroopers jumping down from airplanes above are symbolic violations of what may be perceived of as extensions of one's personal space. "If you attack my country, you attack me." The obvious penetration of individual bodies by arrows, spears, bayonet and bullets shot or thrust by male adversaries only confirms the symbolic import. (Machismo requires that victories be won by proper penetration rather than by unfair (unsporting) techniques such as bacteriological or chemical warfare—cf. Fussell, 1975:26-27 on the German use of chlorine gas in World War I as reflecting the Prussians' inadequate concept of "playing the game.")

In a few isolated instances victors in warfare did apparently submit prisoners to anal intercourse. So Lawrence of Arabia was evidently forced to endure sodomy by his Turkish captors at Deraa in 1917 (Knightley and Simpson, 1969:214). But whether actual sodomy occurs or not is hardly the issue. It is a traditional image invoked to signify humiliating defeat. Once again, we find there is unequivocal folkloristic data which elucidates the latent content of warfare. A song popular among British soldiers in World War II (and possibly World War I as well) which begins: "I don't want to be a soldier, I don't want to go to war..." has the following second stanza (Page, 1975:21):

Don't want a bullet up me arsehole,
Don't want me bollocks shot away,
I'd rather live in England,
In merry, merry England,
And fornicate me fucking life away.

Folklore is a vehicle for making the unconscious conscious. The fear of warfare is unquestionably manifested in (homo)sexual terms. The singer doesn't want to be anally attacked—why does he fear a bullet in his 'arsehole' rather than some other part of the anatomy? And he doesn't want to be emasculated by having his testicles shot off. Rather he wants to remain home in England as an active heterosexual fornicator. One stanza from one folksong is scarcely conclusive, but it is certainly suggestive—especially when we remember the lesson taught by "Smear the Queer." That lesson is that the folk may have more insight into the nature of human behavior than do the most learned scholars of the academy. From folklore, we may find data essential for the necessary validation of psychoanalytic anthropological hypotheses.

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