

# Gay Gender Inversion



Vortrag von Dirk Kranz für das Referat für schwule, trans\* und queere Identitäten  
des ASTA der Universität Trier (02.06.2016)

# Geschlechterrollen und Homosexualität

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- Geschlechter-Verwirrung (*gender trouble*) Butler, 1990; de Beauvoir, 1949
  - Geschlecht: biologisch (*sex*/lat. *sexus*) vs. sozial (*gender*/lat. *genus*)
  - Geschlechterrolle (*sex/gender role*, soziales Geschlecht):  
Einstellungen, Verhaltensweisen, Gefühle, Charaktereigenschaften etc., die in einer bestimmten Kultur für ein bestimmtes Geschlecht (*sex*) als typisch wahrgenommen bzw. als angemessen bewertet werden

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- Das Stereotyp der Geschlechterrollenumkehr bei Homosexuellen:  
Die Geschlechterrolle (*gender*) von Homosexuellen ähnelt der Geschlechterrolle von Heterosexuellen des anderen Geschlechts (*sex*).

# Geschlechterrollen und Homosexualität



# Geschlechterrollen und Homosexualität

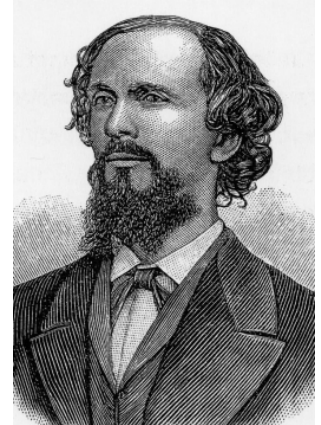
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- Nachfolgend: zwei sozialpsychologische Studien, die sich mit dem Stereotyp der Geschlechterrollenumkehr bzgl. schwuler Männer beschäftigen, und zwar im Hinblick auf ...
  - „gegenderte“ Charaktereigenschaften (Studie A – A1 und A2)
  - „gegenderte“ Emotionsausdrücke (Studie B – B1 und B2)
- Aber zuvor: ein historischer Exkurs ...

# Gender inversion: Wissenschaftliche Wurzeln (1)

## Karl Heinrich Ulrichs (1825–1895)

- Deutscher Jurist und Vorreiter der neuen Sexualwissenschaft (sowie der Schwulenbewegung) mit starkem Einfluss auf andere Sexualwissenschaftler der ersten Stunde (z.B. Magnus Hirschfeld, Albert Moll, Karoly Maria Kertbeny, Havelock Ellis, Marc-André Raffalovich)



- Inversionsannahme: Homosexualität als angeborene und gutartige Geschlechteranomalie („anima muliebris virili corpore inclusa“):

„Abgesondert von der weiblichen Richtung unseres geschlechtlichen Liebestriebes tragen wir Urninge noch ein anderes weibliches Element in uns, welches [...] in überraschender Weise den positiven Beweis liefert, dass die Natur in uns körperlich den männlichen Keim entwickelte, geistig aber den weiblichen. Dieses andere weibliche Element tragen wir in uns von frühester Kindheit an. Unser Charakter, die Art, wie wir fühlen, unsere ganze Gemüthsart ist nicht männlich, sie ist entschieden weiblich.“ (Forschungen, p. 12)

Karl Heinrich Ulrichs (1864). *Forschungen über das Räthsel der mannmännlichen Liebe*. Leipzig: Matthes.

Magnus Hirschfeld (1914). *Die Homosexualität des Mannes und des Weibes*. Berlin: Marcus.

Moll, Albert. 1891. *Die konträre Sexualempfindung*. Berlin: Fischer.

Karoly Maria Kertbeny (2000). *Schriften zur Homosexualitätsforschung* (ed. by Manfred Herzer), Berlin: Verlag Rosa Winkel.

Havelock Ellis (with John Addington Symonds; 1897/1925). *Sexual inversion* (Studies in the psychology of sex, vol. 2, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). London: University Press.

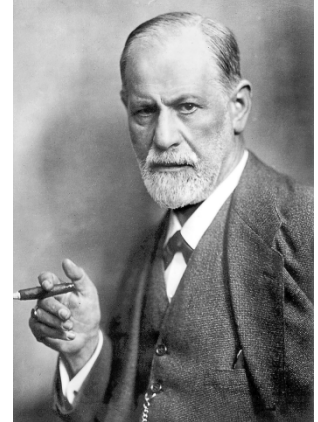
Marc-André Raffalovich (1895). L'Uranisme: Inversion sexuelle congénitale. *Archives d'Anthropologie Criminelle*, 10, 99-127.

# Gender inversion: Wissenschaftliche Wurzeln (2)

## Sigmund Freud (1856–1936)

- Begründer der Psychoanalyse, der zufolge Bisexualität den Ausgangspunkt und Homosexualität eine Möglichkeit der individuellen Sexualentwicklung darstellt:

“Homosexuality [...] cannot be classified as an illness; we consider it to be a variation of the [bi-] sexual function produced by a certain arrest of sexual development.” (Letter to an American mother, 1935)



- Inversionsannahme: Relative Stärke femininer vs. maskuliner Anlagen verursacht anhaltende ödipale (d.h. Mutter-) Identifikation und gleichgeschlechtliche Attraktion:

„Die Genese der männlichen Homosexualität ist in einer großen Reihe von Fällen die folgende: Der junge Mann ist ungewöhnlich lange und intensiv im Sinne des Ödipuskomplexes an seine Mutter fixiert gewesen. Endlich kommt doch nach vollendeter Pubertät die Zeit, die Mutter gegen ein anderes Sexualobjekt zu vertauschen. Da geschieht eine plötzliche Wendung; der Jüngling verläßt nicht seine Mutter, sondern identifiziert sich mit ihr, er wandelt sich in sie um und sucht jetzt nach Objekten, die ihm sein Ich ersetzen können, die er so lieben und pflegen kann, wie er es von der Mutter erfahren hatte.“ (Massenpsychologie, p. 119)

# Gender inversion: Kritikansätze

- **Alfred Kinsey** (1948): Dekonstruktion der Dichotomie *hetero- vs. homosexuell* durch die Annahme eines bipolaren Kontinuums der sexuellen Orientierung (“Kinsey Scale”); Differenzierung zwischen sexuellem Verhalten und sexueller Fantasie
- **Post-Kinsey-Ära**: Differenzierung zwischen sexuellen Gedanken, Gefühlen und Sexualverhalten sowie sexueller Präferenz, Identifikation und sexuellem Lebensstil e.g., Shively & De Cecco, 1977
- **Queer-Theorie**: Sexualität als soziale Konstruktion; Fokus auf Diversität sexuellen Erlebens und Verhaltens und auf Spannung zwischen Individuum und Sex/Gender e.g., Bem, 1993

“I am not now and never have been a ‘heterosexual.’ But neither have I ever been a ‘lesbian’ or a ‘bisexual.’ [...] The sex-of partner dimension implicit in the three categories [...] seems irrelevant to my own particular pattern of erotic attractions and sexual experiences. [...] Although some of the (very few) individuals to whom I have been attracted [...] have been men and some have been women, what those individuals have in common has nothing to do with either their biological sex or mine – from which I conclude, not that I am attracted to both sexes, but that my sexuality is organized around dimensions other than sex.” (The lenses, p. vii)





# Gender inversion: Eine Wiederkehr?

## Daryl Bem (\*1938)

- Sozialpsychologe an der Cornell University, bekannt durch die Selbstwahrnehmungstheorie (*self-perception theory*) und – in jüngerer Zeit – durch Arbeiten zur Genese der sexuellen Orientierung des Menschen
- Homosexualität als (nicht triviale) Inversion:
  - Kindliches Temperament prädisponiert zu geschlechts(a)typischen Aktivitäten
  - Alteritätsgefühl bzgl. des anderen (eigenen) Geschlechts verursacht physiologische und – insbesondere ab der Pubertät – sexuelle Erregung: “exotic becomes erotic”
- Integration der Erbe-Umwelt-Kontroverse



There are three essentialist assumptions [of the EBE theory of sexual orientation]. First, it is assumed that childhood temperaments are partially coded in the genes and, second, that those temperaments can influence a child's preferences for male-typical or female-typical activities. Third, and most fundamentally, it is assumed that the psychological processes that transform exotic into erotic are universal properties of the human species. That's it. Everything else is cultural overlay, including the concept of sexual orientation itself. (Exotic becomes erotic, p. 331)

# Gender inversion: Realität oder Stereotyp?

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## **Sind Schwule/Lesben „wirklich“ *gender inverted*? → Differentielle Psychologie**

- Unterschiede in „gegenderten“ (z.B. beruflichen) Interessen und Selbstzuschreibungen (z.B. Expressivität vs. Instrumentalität); „gender shift rather than gender inversion“ (Lippa, 2005, 2008; Bailey et al., 1995, 2000; Pillard, 1991; Rieger et al., 2008)
- Gründe für diese Unterschiede können allerdings vielfältig sein
  - *Genetisch/biologisch*: Zwillingsforschung und Vergleichsforschung (Unterschiede in Hirnstruktur, Hormonkonzentration, Pheromonsensitivität etc.) → Suche nach einem biologischen Substrat der sexuellen Orientierung
  - *Sozial/kulturell*: Sozialisations-, Kultur-, Emanzipationsforschung → Homosexualität als Infragestellung von Geschlechtsrollenkonformität

## **Werden Schwule (Lesben) als *gender inverted* wahrgenommen? → Sozialpsychologie**

- Nachfolgend: zwei Studien zu schwulen Männern, und zwar im Hinblick auf ...
  - „gegenderte“ Charaktereigenschaften (Studie A)
  - „gegenderte“ Emotionsausdrücke (Studie B)

# Are all the Nice Guys Gay?

## **The Impact of Sociability and Competence on the Social Perception of Male Sexual Orientation\***

Dirk Kranz, Katharina Pröbstle, and Alkis Evidis

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 **Universität Trier**

\* Kranz, D., Pröbstle, K. & Evidis, A. (in press). Are all the nice guys gay? The impact of sociability and competence on the social perception of male sexual orientation. *Psychology of Men & Masculinity*.

# “Big Two” and Gender

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- By and large, two dimensions are suggested to organize our self- and other-view
  - *Sociability* (“getting along”)
  - *Competence* (“getting ahead”) Hogan, 1982
- Alternative labels have been used ... but they all share a common idea
  - *Nurturance* and *dominance* Leary, 1957
  - *Communion* and *agency* Bakan, 1966
  - *Warmth* and *competence* Fiske et al., 2007
- Close relationship between the “Big Two” and gender roles (i.e., attributes and behaviors that are considered typical/appropriate for individuals of a specific sex)
  - Sociability as part of the *feminine* gender role
  - Competence as part of the *masculine* gender role
- Cf. the core gender role aspects
  - *Expressiveness* as femininity
  - *Instrumentality* as masculinity Spence & Helmreich, 1980

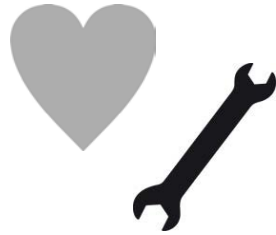
# Gender inversion/transgression (I)

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- People (still) expect wo/men to conform to “their” fe/male gender role including opposite-sex attraction → heteronormativity
- Homosexuals are often and mostly among (heterosexual) males perceived as *gender inverted* Kite & Deaux, 1987; Bem, 2000
  - Gay men appear more similar to heterosexual women than to heterosexual men
  - Lesbian women appear more similar to heterosexual men than to heterosexual women
- Male gender role transgression, especially when shown by openly gay men, is disapproved more than female gender role transgression, whether shown by lesbian or heterosexual women → status hypothesis Feinman, 1984; Powlishta, 2004
- Disapproval of gender role transgression primarily refers to concrete behavior compared to abstract personality Blashill & Powlishta, 2012; Horn, 2007
  - “Camp” mannerism for (gay) males
  - “Butch” mannerism for (lesbian) females

# This research

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Tripartite  
relationship:

“Big two” of  
personality

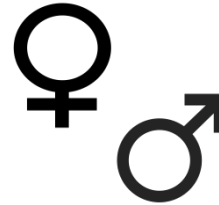
- Sociability  
 (“getting along”)
- Competence  
 (“getting ahead”)

Hogan, 1982;

Bakan, 1966;

Fiske et al., 2007;

Leary, 1957



Dualistic  
gender role (GR)

- Sociability  
 as part of the  
 feminine GR
- Competence  
 as part of the  
 masculine GR

Bem, 1974;

Spence & Helmreich, 1980



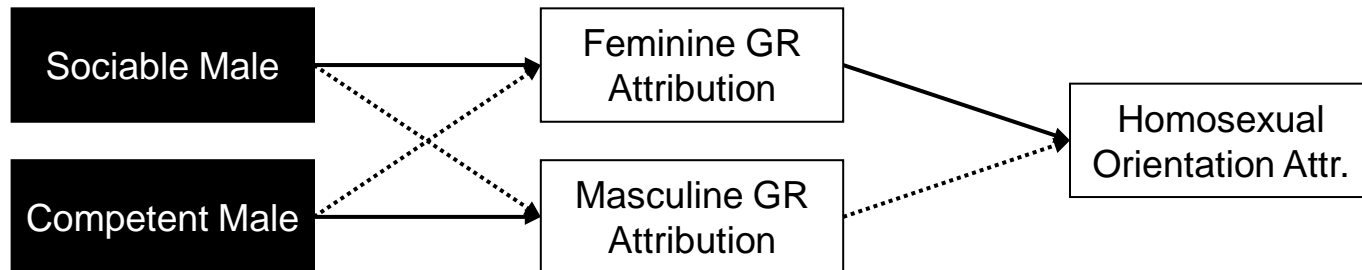
Gender  
inversion

Homosexuals  
appear more  
similar to  
heterosexuals  
of the  
*opposite sex*

Kite & Deaux, 1987;

Bem, 2000

# Hypothesis (I)



IV are depicted by black boxes, DV by white boxes; positive associations are indicated by continuous lines, negative associations by dashed lines, and strength of association is indicated by line boldness

# Hypothesis (II)

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- **Main Hypothesis:** Male target persons who are described as sociable are thought to have a greater likelihood of being gay than male targets who are described as competent. This effect can be explained as a gender inversion effect.
- **Open Question:** Is homophobia – as indicated by negative attitude toward and little contact with homosexual people Herek, 1984; cf. Allport, 1954 – associated with the hypothesized stereotype of the sociable (versus competent) gay man?
  - Yes, homophobic people (males?!) are prone to stereotypical thinking about (gay) men (independent of the stereotype content)
  - No, as a positively connoted attribute, sociability attribution is incompatible with the homophobic perception of (gay) men



# Participants and procedure

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## ***N* = 180 students of a Bavarian vocational school**

- 87 males and 93 females (51.7%)
- Aged between 16 and 25 years ( $M = 18$  years)
- Most had a medium educational level (59.8%)

## **Presentation of a sociable and competent target (WS)**

- Study's specific interest in sexual orientation was not disclosed
- Each target presentation included a face portrait (Jan vs. Tom) and a character description (sociability vs. competence)
- Random assignments of face portraits and character descriptions and random order of target presentation
- Subjects rated targets' attractiveness, gender role, and sexual orientation
- Assessment of subjects' anti-gay attitudes and contact with gay men

# Target presentation (example)



Jan ist 25 Jahre alt. Er kann sich gut in andere hineinversetzen und eine angenehme Stimmung verbreiten. Jan ist ein humorvoller Mensch und kommt daher mit seinen Mitmenschen gut klar.

Jan has the talent to empathize with others and make them feel at ease. He has a quite good sense of humor, which results in pleasant interactions between him and many of his colleagues.



Auch Tom ist 25 Jahre alt. Er arbeitet sehr hart und löst selbst schwierigste Probleme. Außerdem schafft es Tom, seine Arbeit gut zu organisieren und auch mehrere Aufgaben gleichzeitig zu erledigen.

Tom has worked hard all season, and besides that, he just knows how to tackle complex problems. He happens to have the talent to organize things tightly and handle several tasks at the same time.

# Measures (I)

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## Experimental (i.e., target-related) measures

- *Target attractiveness*: “How attractive do you think Jan/Tom is?”  
(0 = “very unattractive” to 4 = “very attractive”)  
→ control variable
- *Target gender role*. 4-item Masculinity and Femininity Short Scales taken from the PAQ Spencer & Helmreich, 1978; Lubinski et al., 1983
  - dominant, forceful, strong personality, willing to take risks
  - warm, sympathetic, understanding, eager to soothe hurt feelings(0 = “not at all” to 4 = “very much”);  $\alpha$ s = .70/.79 (masculinity) and .81/.79 (femininity)  
→ manipulation check
- *Target sexual orientation*: “Many men feel attracted by women. Others, namely gay men, feel attracted by men. What do you think, how likely is it that Jan/Tom is gay?” (0 = 0% to 10 = 100%)  
→ crucial variable

# Measures (II)

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## Personality (i.e., target-unrelated) measures

- *Anti-gay attitudes*: 10-item ATGM Scale Herek, 1988
  - “I think homosexual men are disgusting”
  - “Homosexual men should not be allowed to teach school”
  - “The idea of gay marriage seems ridiculous to me”
  - “Male homosexuality is a natural expression of sexuality in men” (reversed)
  - etc.

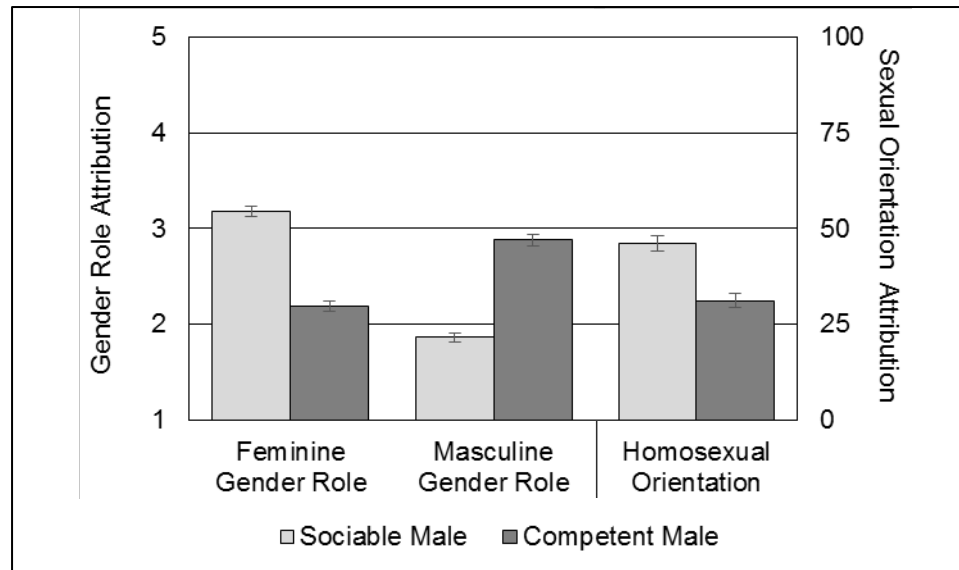
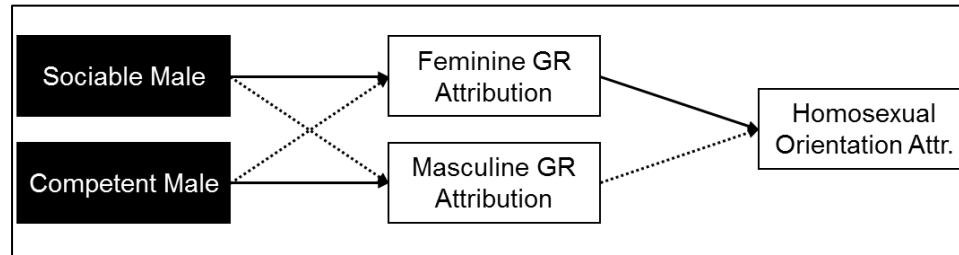
(0 = “not at all” to 4 = “very much”);  $\alpha = .95$
- *Contact with gay men*: “How often do you have personal contact with gay men?”  
(0 = never, 1 = rarely, 2 = sometimes, 3 = often);  $r_{\text{CWGM, ATGM}} = - .40^{**}$

# Results (I)

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- None of the experimental effects was moderated by *participant sex*; thus, *participant sex* was skipped from the following ANOVAs
  - ME *participant sex* on homosexual orientation: Males rated targets generally as more likely to be gay than females ( $M_s = 42.1\%$  vs.  $35.3\%$ )
  - Absence of IA *target character*  $\times$  *participant sex* on sexual orientation attribution deserves attention because most relevant studies found sex differences in (anti-) gay stereotyping e.g., Herek, 1988, Kite & Whitley, 1996; Ratcliff et al., 2006
- Attractiveness ratings were unaffected by *target character* ( $M_s = 2.53$  vs.  $2.51$ ); thus, possible effects of target character on gender role or sexual orientation attribution were *not* mediated by target appearance

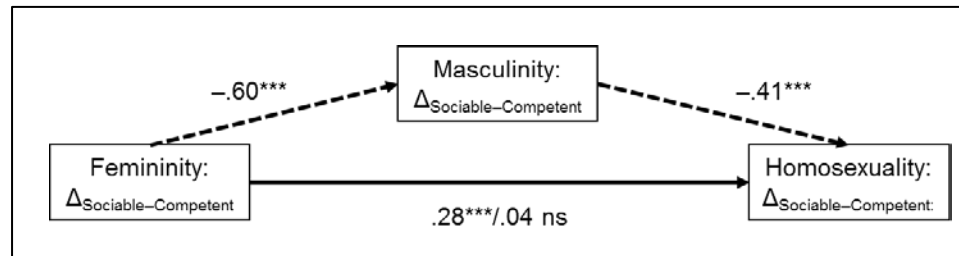
## Results (II)



- IA *target gender role* × *target character*; both SME sign.
- ME *target character* on sexual orientation rating
- To check for demand effects, analyses were additionally restricted to the *first* target presentation: All results replicated

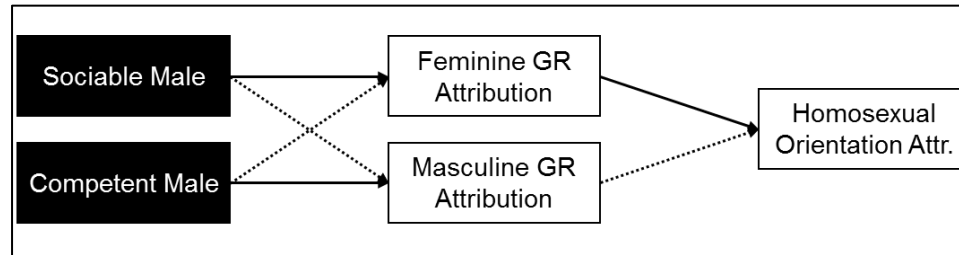
## Results (III)

- Multiple regression of Homosexuality:  $\Delta_{\text{Sociable-Competent}}$   
 on Feminine gender role:  $\Delta_{\text{Sociable-Competent}}$   $\beta = .04$   
 Masculine gender role:  $\Delta_{\text{Sociable-Competent}}$   $\beta = \underline{-.41***}$   
 $R^2 = .19***$
- As a further set of multiple regression analyses showed, the higher feminine gender role attribution to sociable versus competent gay men found at the bivariate level was completely mediated by lower masculine gender role attribution ( $z = 4.40***$ )



- Homosexuality attribution:  $\Delta_{\text{Sociable-Competent}}$  was neither correlated with negative attitude toward gay men ( $r = -.05$ ) nor with contact with gay men ( $r = .13^+$ ; marginally positive relationship!); thus, there is no evidence for an *anti-gay* interpretation of the “nice gay” stereotype

# Summary



- Sociable men were perceived as more feminine and less masculine as well as having a greater likelihood of being gay than competent men
- Perceived masculinity fully mediated the relationship between perceived feminine gender role and homosexuality attribution of sociable vs. competent men
- Compared to gay friendly participants, those with negative attitudes toward or no or only little contact with gay men did *not* provide higher ratings of homosexuality for sociable vs. competent men



# Conclusions

- Importance of the conceptual distinction between (anti-) *gay stereotypes* and *prejudices*
- Stereotypical association between sociability, femininity, and male homosexuality could be very differently motivated
  - *heterosexist attitudes* (“real men are tough guys”)
  - *positive experiences* (“gay men are nice people”)
- Evidence for a rather neutral (to slightly positive) stereotype of the sociable/feminine gay man – which is not that strong that it could not be (experimentally) altered (cf. the public perception of competent gay men, e.g. in politics and sports)
- Wealth of research on *anti-gay* stereotyping but almost no research on neutral (or even positive) gay stereotyping (which might emerge with societal changes); thus, the picture of the “nice gay man” deserves further attention in future research



# Gay Emotions

## **A Person-Perception Perspective\***

Dirk Kranz, Stefanie Weil, and Theresa Wortmeier

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\* Kranz, D., Weil, S. & Wortmeier, T. (2016, July). Gay Emotions: A Person-Perception Perspective. Paper presented at the 31st International Congress of Psychology, Yokohama, 24.07. – 29.07.2016.

# Theoretical background (I)

## Gay men and gay emotions

- Today, most homosexuals prefer to identify, and to be identified, as *gay* (males and females) or *lesbian* (for females) instead of *homosexual*; the latter has a heteronormative connotation because it all too easily insinuates homosexuality as immoral or unhealthy Boellstorff & Leap, 2004
- The “second” meaning: *Gay* refers to a pleasant emotional state; its original (12<sup>th</sup> century) meaning is *happy* and *carefree* Oxford English Dictionary, 2008
- In the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, gay rights activists started to reclaim the – from the 18<sup>th</sup> century onwards also disparagingly used – term *gay* in order to overcome the negative attitudes towards homosexuality and homosexuals Dynes, 1990
- A crucial question of the present study concerns the relationship between the two meanings of *gay*: Due to the gendered nature of emotions, the facial expression of gay (happy) feelings might be characteristic of gay (homosexual) men – at least, from a third-person (i.e., social perception) perspective.



# Theoretical background (II)

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## Gendered emotions and sexual orientation

- People infer from emotion expression to underlying personality characteristics (including gender roles) Hess, Adams, & Kleck, 2008; Scherer, Clark-Polner, & Mortillaro, 2011
- *Gender roles* are societal norms dictating what types of characteristics and behaviors are generally considered acceptable, appropriate, or desirable for a person based on her/his actual sex
- Emotional life is gendered Brody & Hall, 2008; Fischer & LaFrance, 2015
  - Some emotions are female connoted (e.g., happiness, sadness), others are male connoted (e.g., anger, disgust<sup>?</sup>, pride<sup>?</sup>)
  - Females are more emotional than males (which holds especially for “female emotions” and emotion expression)
- Homosexuals are stereotypically perceived as *gender inverted* Kite & Deaux, 1987
  - Gay men appear most similar to heterosexual women and lesbian women appear most similar to heterosexual men
  - People showing gender role characteristics of the other sex are rather categorized as homosexual than people conforming to their gender role

# Hypothesis

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- Referring to the gender inversion effect, we hypothesize that men displaying female emotions (happiness and sadness) are rather thought to be gay than men displaying male emotions (anger and disgust).
- In addition, we will examine whether the assumed effect pattern is differentially moderated by homophobia and sex.
  - Given that prejudiced people rely more on stereotypical processing than unprejudiced ones, the link between female-connoted emotions and male homosexuality should be stronger in anti-gay people.
  - Since males, in general, show more homophobic attitudes than females, we also hypothesize gender-moderated effects.

# Method (I)

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## **Sample**

- Convenience sample:  $N = 295$  participants; 52.9% females; 18 to 30 years ( $M = 22$ ); mostly university students (86.1%)

## **Procedure**

- “Online-study on social impression formation”
- Presentation of four different male target persons, each displaying a different emotion: happiness, sadness, anger, and disgust (random order)
- Rating of target gender role and sexual orientation
- Assessment of participant homophobia

# Method (II)

Material from the Montreal Set of Facial Displays Beaupré & Hess, 2005



# Method (III)

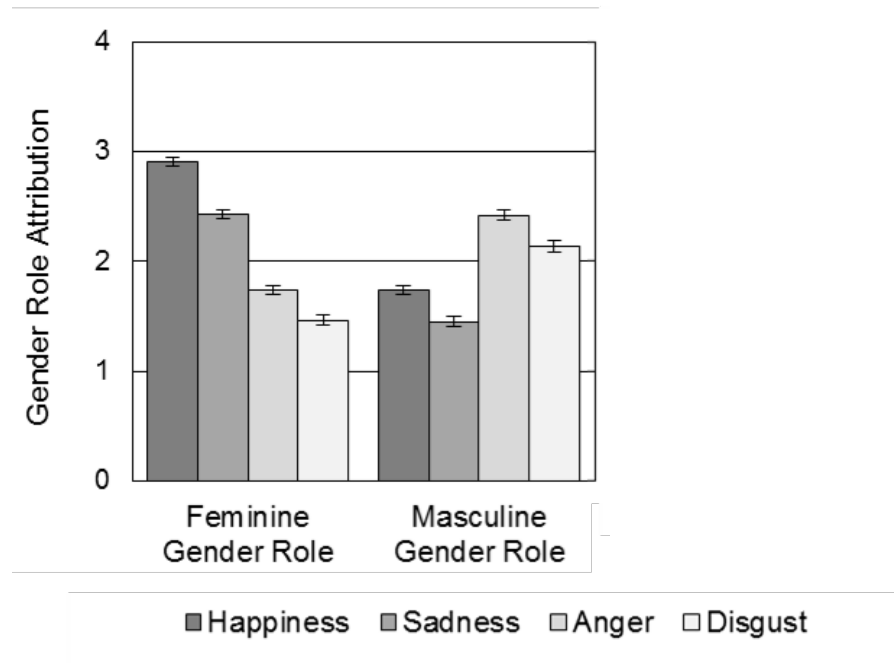
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## Measures

- **Target gender role.** Subset of the BSRI Bem, 1974:  
warm, sympathetic, understanding, eager to soothe hurt feelings (femininity);  
dominant, forceful, strong personality, willing to take risks (masculinity);  
acceptable reliabilities ( $.74 \leq \alpha \leq .87$ )
- **Target sexual orientation.** Likelihood rating Kranz, Pröbstle, & Evidis (in press):  
“Many men feel attracted by women. Some, namely gay men, feel attracted by men. What do you think, how likely is it that this person is gay?” Ratings were done on an 11-point scale ranging from 0 (0%) to 10 (100%)
- **Participant homophobia.** ATGM Herek, 1988: e.g., “I think homosexual men are disgusting”, “Male homosexuality is a natural expression of sexuality in men”;  
high reliability ( $\alpha = .89$ )

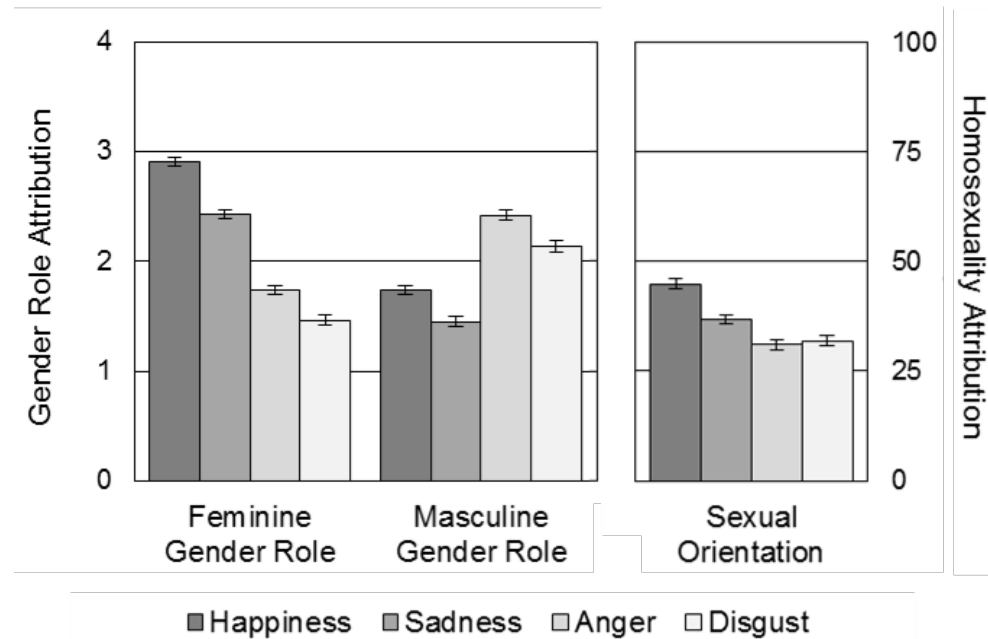


# Results (I)



Target gender role: Significant interaction between gender role and emotion expression,  $F(3, 879) = 236.82, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .45$ ; all pairwise comparisons computed separately for the femininity and masculinity attributions were significant at  $p < .001$ .

## Results (II)

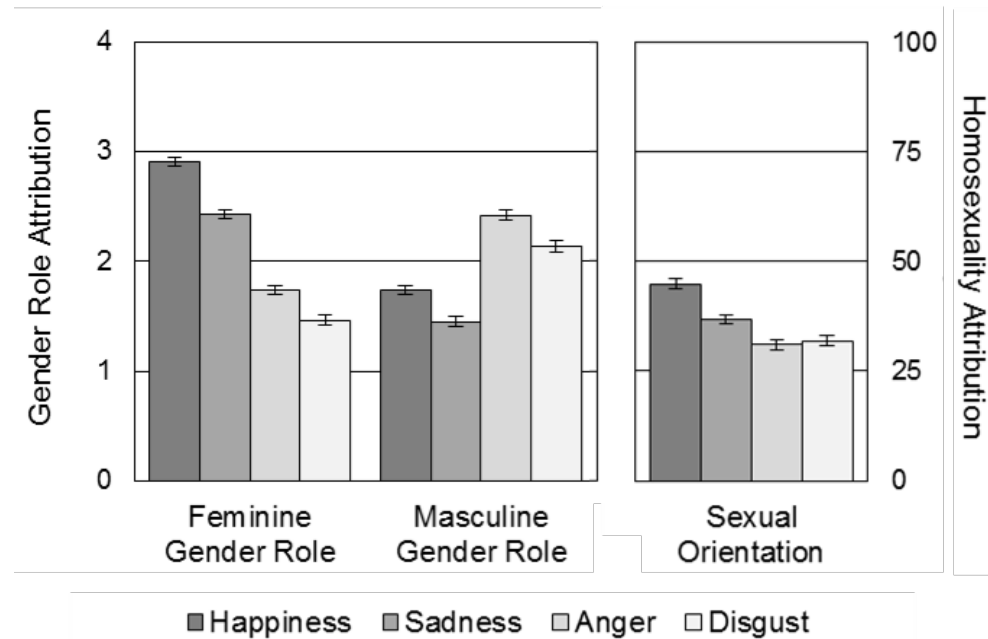


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Target sexual orientation: Significant main effect of emotion expression,  $F(3, 879) = 42.69, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .13$ ; all pairwise comparisons, except between anger and disgust, were significant at  $p < .01$ .

No moderation by participant gender!

## Results (III)



Only one “borderline” significant correlation between target homosexual orientation and ATGM: Participants scoring high in homophobia rated targets with a happy expression as *less* (!) likely to be gay ( $r = -.12, p = .05$ ).

# Summary/conclusion

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- Men showing sadness and, especially, happiness were perceived as more feminine and less masculine as well as having a greater likelihood of being gay than men showing anger and disgust.
- This pattern was independent from participants' sex or homophobia (i.e., homophobic attitudes).
- As expected, (male) emotion expression was gendered, ...
- ... and participants inferred, according to the gender inversion hypothesis, from target (male) emotion expression to target sexual orientation.
- Effects were strongest for happiness (as a gay emotion)
- Again, the effect pattern was independent from participants' sex or homophobia → conceptual distinction between (anti-) gay *stereotypes* and *prejudices*

# Diskussion

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## **Werden Schwule als *gender inverted* wahrgenommen?**

- Ja, dies trifft zu im Hinblick auf
  - „gegenderte“ Charaktereigenschaften: Soziabilität vs. Kompetenz (Studie 1)
  - „gegenderte“ Emotionsausdrücke: Freude, Trauer vs. Ärger, Ekel (Studie 2)

## **Ist diese *gender inversion* Ausdruck von Homophobie?**

- Nein, keine Zusammenhänge mit
  - Kontakt zu Schwulen (Studie 1) und Homophobie (Studien 1 und 2)
  - dem Geschlecht der Probanden (Studien 1 und 2)

## **Anschlussfragen**

- Wären ähnliche Ergebnisse im Hinblick auf weibliche Stimuluspersonen zu erwarten?
- Gibt es ein *gender inversion*-Stereotyp bei Bi-/Trans-/Asexuellen?
- Wie beurteilen wir „gegenderte“ Eigenschaften, wie erleben wir *gender inversion*?  
Erscheint uns *gender neutrality* ideal?