

Zeitschrift: Der Kreis : eine Monatsschrift = Le Cercle : revue mensuelle
Band: 29 (1961)
Heft: 2

Artikel: The male homosexual and marriage
Autor: McAndrews, John
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-568156>

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THE MALE HOMOSEXUAL AND MARRIAGE

The male homosexual quite frequently got married legitimately—that I knew. The motives behind such an action were sometimes quite clear, sometimes fuzzy. Usually it was a case of a panicky youngster attempting to 'normalize' himself in a kind of desperate gesture, trying something that he would know he would never be fitted for, if he only paused to examine the situation. Once in a very rare while you would find such a marriage made because the man hated women so much that he wanted to make at least one of them completely miserable.

Inevitably he did make his wife miserable, no matter whether or not she knew his emotional slanting before. Many such men have told me, with a certain fatuous and smug dramatic air, that «Isabel knows everything and understands completely. She says that any time I want to go out with my friends, it will be all right with her.»

What idiot folly! In their naivete, the simple ones actually believe such statements! They are not aware of the change that takes place in a woman after marriage. She might sincerely have meant it when she made the statement because she privately believed that she could 'cure' her new husband, not realizing any more than he did that he did not want to be cured at all. But when the evening comes that her young man grows restless and decides he will go to see his old friend Norman, then what will the new wife do? She will use every trick at her command—tears, scenes, back-biting, reproaches, vilifications—to keep him home. The image of the male body that belongs to her—and by law to her alone—enlaced in the arms and legs of a faceless beautiful young man, stirs up the dogs of jealousy and the furies of possession.

Or perhaps the wife has no knowledge of her husband's other life, having unwittingly married one of those homosexuals bent on a secret experiment with himself. Her life then becomes an existence of unending misery, incomprehensions, and bafflement. She catches her man in lies and evasions; she suspects the many rendezvous which he arranges, thinking they are with another woman. The honest bewilderment of a good woman who unknowingly enters such a contract is pitiful and painful to see. Her husband is at once so tender and so indifferent, so sympathetic and yet so gauche, so intimately close and admiring and yet suddenly so distant—so deeply understanding, and yet so blind to her needs and dull to her puzzled call. He is under a spell or hallucination, she thinks; it will pass if she gives him her good love. It does not pass, and she is uncertain and hurt, wondering wherein she has failed.

Sometimes, it is true, there is an 'understanding': both husband and wife are so, and their marriage becomes an *affaire de convenance*—a kind of red-herring to drag across both their trails, for the wedding ring has concealed more crimes since it was invented than you can find in the silly pages of Krafft-Ebing's *Psychopathia Sexualis*. Even to think of 'love' in such a sterile and barren arrangement is impossible; more often than not, one finds that such a couple turns out to be two pimps, mutually supplying each other with new bodies for a momentary thrill.

The invert, it seemed to me, should live alone and learn to like it, and to be self-sufficing.

(From an unpublished novel)

by John McAndrews