

SINGLE PARENTHOOD

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"I'm dating again," she said, with a kind of tenuous enthusiasm, then shrugged and added, "I know. I thought I really had given it up, but maybe it's worth another try." Divorced for almost eight years, she had in that time met three or four men who became important parts of her life. But like many single parents, she became discouraged as she built up relationships and then watched them gradually dissolve.

Single parenthood has sometimes been described as life in the carnival fun house—where the floor keeps shifting under your feet. Invariably, from many sources, there come direct or indirect social pressures to "settle down," pressures which when resisted often generate doubts about personal stability and even the ability to love and be loved. In this context, to "find someone" represents winning; to end a relationship, for whatever reason, is seen as defeat, failure, losing again. And somehow, whatever the experience has been, it is somehow devalued because it hasn't ended in a lifetime commitment.

In truth, for most people single parenthood requires adjustment on several levels—economic, emotional, and social—often all at the same time. While the degree of adjustment may vary, depending upon whether the person is divorced, widowed, or never-married, few men or women who take on total responsibility for home and children do so without some temporary loss of focus or ability to function. While needs of a survival nature—food, shelter, job—are of paramount importance, it has been found that, next to financial concerns, the social needs of the one-parent family are most important: the need for more interpersonal support at home, for integration (or reintegration) into community life, for stimulating social outlets, and for just plain fun. The degree of social isolation may vary. Widows experience less community stigma and may tend to be less isolated than separated or divorced single parents who feel disapproval and exclusion from family and community supports. Never-married parents experience even greater stigma, and may be the most isolated with less all-around support from the community.

The services of the Single Parent Support Center, spon-

sored by the Single Parent Family Project, Inc. of New York City, are designed to ease the adjustment problems single parents encounter, and, by reconfirming them as viable spiritual and emotional individuals, to enable them to resume a more socially and community supported life. The people served, many of whom have been referred by other agencies, come from all the boroughs of New York City, from many different ethnic groups, and predominantly from moderate income families. Approximately 40% have never been married, 60% are widowed or divorced, the ages range from the late 20s to early 40s, and there is a considerably higher proportion of women than of men. As a rule, they seek us out when, after about a year of single parenthood, they have, as they say, "worn out" their friends. The number of children in each family runs from one to three, almost all being under 12 years of age.

The Center's Parent Stress Clinic, staffed by people with background experience in other community organizations, provides short-term peer counseling to help single parents establish priorities and begin to make independent decisions. Its goal is to connect them to services, entitlements, and informal networks in their local neighborhoods. Many eventually move from this individualized service into our mutual support group program which provides an opportunity to exchange views with other single-parent men and women, and to make new friends for themselves and their children. Group facilitators, themselves single parents who have completed a short training course in leading discussions, encourage each person to establish a perspective on the past and then to concentrate on facing present and future needs and opportunities.

Discussions in these groups range widely among such concerns as child rearing, job and career choices, housing discrimination, and the practical aspects of being a parent—discipline, nutrition, health. Carefully selected topics for discussion can sensitize these parents to the things they have in common with other single parents, despite variations in economic or cultural backgrounds. In the secure "helping" atmosphere of the

group, single parents exhibit an eagerness to talk and a surprising candor about most matters. Nevertheless, certain topics with heavy emotional overtones can put a sudden damper on that honest spontaneity. The subject of finding a date, for example, elicits much joking and teasing—single parents are not alone in seeking “safety” in humor. But, as discussion progresses deeper to dealing with loneliness or starting over, another reaction is seen, for now they are approaching the questions of intimate relationships and sexuality, a realm that for many single parents mirrors their personal worth, their success or failure as human beings. Here the facilitator who is him/herself a single parent can be especially helpful since the sharing of personal experiences not only establishes mutual vulnerability but also gives “permission” to talk about self-interest and individual goals.

Because our society is conditioned to reward “good” parents—mother and father forever together—most single parents receive no comparable reinforcement of their social, sexual worth. For some, the single-parent group provides an opportunity to speak about this aspect of their lives without fear of condemnation from others. One woman speaks of family pressure: “My father feels he has the right to tell me what I can and can’t do. As soon as I divorced, he began to take over my life. For him, I became a daughter again.” Such monitoring may often come also from an ex-husband who (himself in many cases remarried) tries to oversee conduct “for the sake of the children,” sometimes challenging fitness for custody if the mother’s personal life does not pass muster with him. The supervisory power others want to exert involves mostly female single parents, who face loss of status at the end of a marriage. The price of remaining in the safe orbit of family and friends often means masking their unique status. They are parents and sexual creatures in a world in which the sexuality of parents is kept discreetly under wraps, and too often they must choose between accepting desexualization of one’s self or making a new life away from traditional supports.

Certainly the presence of children is a restraining and complicating element in re-establishing the single parent as a socially active individual. Unfortunately, much of the literature available to guide the newly single parent seems to concentrate on “arming for the hunt,” emphasizing refurbishing of the body and mind to appeal to a new partner or (even more devastating to the confidence) warning of the problems and serious implications for children should the parent become involved in new relationships, especially if these do not culminate in marriage. Single parents care about their children’s stability and emotional life, and most move cautiously as they begin to search for adult companionship. While most married couples rarely feel they have to explain or justify their own emotional and sexual needs to their children, single parents often feel they must try to do so. Most find that, in addition to the other decisions they must make in their daily lives, they must now develop a moral standard which not only satisfies their own needs and beliefs but which can also be transmitted to their children to the benefit of both and injury to neither.

Self-imposed limitations solve the problem for some who state that they will wait until their children are grown and out of the house before dating. “I would never have a man stay overnight while my son is still living at home,” says a widow. Confusion, undue attachment to non-permanent figures, pain at ending a relationship, are given as reasons why some parents are cautious about new people in their lives. In this we hear the good, loving, protective parent speaking, saving children from possible hurt or the expectation of something which

will not be realized. However, it is often not clear in discussions who—parent or child—is being “protected” by such ground rules or accommodations.

Most women we see would like someone special in their lives; however, they do not necessarily want to remarry. Feeling confident and capable as she surmounts many obstacles to manage her own life, one woman stated: “I sometimes think I’m not able to live with another adult human being any more, I’ve become so selfish.” She fears that her new-found strength, so necessary for survival, may work against her. “Men in my age bracket want more docile, pliant women, and I now find it hard to defer to anyone.” For many the prospect of sharing a life with someone new means loss of autonomy. While the burdens of being a parent alone are heavy, alone-ness, once faced, is often judged preferable to the traditional tyranny of domesticity which they have lived with before. And this seems to be the point at which many realize that, while they may not know whom they do want, they clearly know whom they *don’t* want. Hard-won independence means freedom to choose—not necessarily a good “prospect,” but someone with whom to go exploring the universe; someone who may not be a meal-ticket but who will acknowledge her maturity and ability and not be threatened by either quality; someone who fits no one’s profile for husband #2, but who may turn from lover into lifetime loving friend.

Some situations are not without humor. One mother told of the unsettling experience of awaiting a call from a date while her teenage daughter hovered near the phone, also waiting. “No one ever prepared me for this,” she said. “When I was young, parents had this settled and if there was sex, it was behind closed doors. It’s so undignified!” This exposure to children of what we all have been trained to consider very private matters can be hard to cope with. For many, the conflict between what they were raised to expect and to be and what their lives have become is pointed up by these incidents.

Continued on page 13

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SPEAKING OUT

. . . For Five Million Single Parents

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Single parent—two words which when used together usually bring forth strong, value-based responses. Word associations produce phrases like *broken home*, *unwed mother*, *latch-key children*, *warring ex-spouses*—all implying inadequate attention to children's needs. The never-married single mother may have the additional label of *promiscuous*, as may the formerly married who chooses to be sexually active. Also, single parents are often held accountable for all kinds of society's ills. In a recent telephone conversation with a television script writer, I was queried about his impression that a prime cause of teenage promiscuity is the ever increasing number of broken homes. So add to the above list *teenage promiscuity*. A professional colleague suggested that perhaps single parents should be considered disadvantaged parents in regard to providing sexuality education for their children. Therefore, add *disadvantaged*. And a national survey of single parents conducted by the National Committee for Citizens in Education found that almost half these parents thought that schools assume that any problems their children have are related to being from a one-parent family. Chalk up *school problems*, too.

With so many negative attitudes floating around those of us who are single parents, is it any wonder that we have been cautious about speaking up about sexuality issues that confront us and our children? Sexuality books in general invariably assume that all parents come in couples, and that all adults are pairs, a male and a female (although there has been some progress in acknowledging that a partner may be someone of the same sex). Sexuality books written especially for singles usually leave a great deal to be desired with regard to the information presented, and rarely assume that children are part of the scene.

I remember my pleasure in discovering that the illustrations in Sol and Judith Gordon's delightful book for young children, *Did the Sun Shine Before You Were Born?* (Ed-U Press, 1977), portrayed all kinds of families, including those headed by a single mother or father. And they were still called families! I also remember my then eight-year old daughter's intense focus on reading Siv Widerberg's book, *The Kids' Own XYZ of Love and Sex* (Stein and Day, 1972), translated from the Swedish, which says that sexual intercourse is something people enjoy, that they have reasons for doing it other than having babies, and that you don't have to be married to enjoy it. That book passed among her friends—many of them also from "broken homes"—until it was dog-eared.

But none of the single-parent books I have seen so far has

been specific about the expression of sexual feelings toward another person—ranging from affection expressed through simple touching or stroking, to holding hands, hugging, and kissing, to actually having sexual intercourse. This would mean mentioning the unmentionable—SEX. Do you wait until after the children are sleeping and ask your partner to leave before they awaken? Do you openly acknowledge the other person's intimate presence in your life, and then say, "Don't tell your mother (or father, or grandmother, or uncle, or aunt)"? Or do you just hope they won't mention it? And what about the neighbors, especially in communities where they may have known you as a two-parent family, and when their children are your children's best friends? Do they approve? And how do you handle an angry response from your child who does not want anyone to replace the absent parent? If there is a custody arrangement, should you restrict your sexual life to those times when your children are visiting their other parent?

I know of no single parent who has not had to struggle on some level with how to be a sexual person and a parent. Most of us were raised with the clear notion that sexual expression goes with marriage. And deep down inside we may not quite have let go of that belief, or we may still want our children to grow up believing it, even though we are not so sure that it will still work for us. As has been reported many times in these pages, what parents do or fail to do is crucial to their child's sexual development. In their observing of adult social interaction and expressions of affection, children receive positive messages about sexuality. Therefore, how do we affirm sexuality as a positive part of life to our children while at the same time we are not too sure that we want them to know that it may or may not be a positive part of our present life as a single parent? Unfortunately, or perhaps fortunately, there are no right or wrong answers. There are alternative behaviors in every situation, and each option carries with it a set of messages to the child about sexuality, and a set of consequences that affect the single parent's relationship with the child, with the lover, and perhaps with other family community members.

I believe that the single parent must first come to terms with his/her own sexuality, with what feels right in the person's own sense of self which may be in the process of changing with singlehood. An important variable in that sense of self is the internal moral and ethical belief system which guides our behavior and by which we judge our actions. A parent who is feeling excessive guilt over sexual activity is not likely to com-

Continued on page 7

WHERE THE ACTION IS

Singles, the Church, and Sexuality: A Consultation

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In September 1980, 40 single Lutheran adults gathered in a Catholic convent at Assisi Heights, Rochester, Minnesota, to discuss the issues of singleness and sexuality within the context of the American Lutheran Church (ALC). This consultation, sponsored by the Division of Life and Mission in the Congregation of the ALC through the efforts of Rev. Richard Beckmen, director for Young Adult Ministries, was inspired by a series of conversations and consultations with young single adults. In these dialogues, sexuality emerged as a fundamental concern.

The purpose of the Rochester consultation, therefore, was to provide a forum for exploring singleness and sexuality in the context of the church. The consultation planners selected a balanced group of single Lutherans encompassing: both sexes; clergy and laity; ages from 20 to 60; those always single, single through separation, divorce, and death; and single parents. It was not a consultation of "experts" called to provide single adults with answers. Rather, its purpose was fulfilled by allowing openness and trust to develop among the participants themselves. This led to honest searching and sharing of their own sexual concerns, with whatever confusion, celebration, joy, and pain the process might involve.

The facilitators' major concerns involved building and maintaining the trust of participants, protecting the confidential nature of the sharing, and encouraging self-expression. To help accomplish these aims, a format was adopted in which each individual was not only part of the entire group of 40, but also of a smaller recording group of six persons. In addition, everyone was asked to record personal thoughts, perceptions, and insights in an individual journal.

Presentations to the large group included an historical analysis of dualisms between the body and the soul, and between male and female. Dualistic thought was found flourishing even today. Participants struggled with their ethical backgrounds and values as members of the American Lutheran Church and as sexual, single adults. A second major presentation included a panel of five persons who shared parts of their own journeys as single adults.

Throughout the weekend, reaction time was provided for in the small groups. Each group had a facilitator who participated in the discussion and saw that a summary was recorded. This group record became part of the documentation for the consultation along with some volunteered journal material. Below are some of the concerns listed in the group summaries under the heading of "Issues, Opportunities, Needs":

- Identify and recognize lifestyles present in the congregation.
- Is it reasonable to expect that the church might learn to hug?
- Education: We must develop a programmatic, compre-

hensive educational ministry in sexuality for parents, children, singles, and the whole congregation, which would provide not only an arena for dialogue and support but also specific training and guidance.

- The church must be a place where we struggle with questions of sexuality, homosexuality, etc. versus condemnation!
- Fidelity: What is it for singles?
- What is sex? What is sexuality?
- Self-pleasuring as a gift, i.e., normal/natural expression of sexuality.
- Sexuality begins at birth and ends at death. The church needs to help individuals learn about their sexuality at all ages.

Scheduled journal writing time was provided in which persons retired to their rooms to reflect and write. Excerpts from the journals indicate that this type of church-sponsored sharing can be greeted with joy:

I have such a warm feeling within myself about having been honest and open concerning my fears and questions. Above all what rings in my mind is the need for dialogue/education within the church. "Come on people now. Let's get together and in the freedom that is our Christ Jesus—let's grapple with our sexuality and spirituality." More and more this weekend I've been able to see how these two are one and the same in a sense. What does it mean to be fully human—to know life as circles, not boxes, as bridges, not fences?

The consultation provided an occasion for former ways of thinking to be re-examined:

But today I am a single person and I'm sure I will remain single for a while. And to look at myself as a whole person, my sexuality and singleness need to be dealt with every day.

The various statements of faith were diverse:

How does a healthy attitude about sexuality free me from myself for the other? I am pleased that this conference of singles has not succumbed to the [narcissism] of the "me" decade. I find we must speak and are speaking of relationships—not necessarily marriage. . . . Single does not mean absence of relationships.

I believe denial of one's sexuality is as sinful as abusing it. There are moments within intimacy when some form of sexual expression has more integrity than to withdraw/hold.

The journals expressed a common vulnerability to and a need for community. It appears that one cannot isolate oneself in one's sexuality, that in the wholeness of living, breathing, and loving, one's sexuality is at the root of being. The assembly at Assisi Heights calls the church to witness to vibrant life and to nurture the whole person, single, sexual, and spiritual.

SEXUALITY AND SINGLE PARENTS: A SELECTED ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

The literature currently available on sexuality and single parents is scant and often disappointing. Although there is a considerable body of material on separation and divorce, much of it does not apply to single parents, a good proportion of whom have never been married. Also, many divorced and widowed people are either childless or have grown children who no longer live at home, and therefore are not dealing with issues of single parenthood.

Furthermore, too much of the literature on single parent families views them as inferior rather than alternative family units, presenting a very negative picture of inherent dangers and problems. Some of the

material contains advice based on highly questionable theories, with very few statistical findings, indicating that almost no scientific research has been done in this area.

The works listed below, most of which are available for use at the SIECUS Resource Center and Library at New York University, present generally positive views of single parenthood and deal specifically with the sexuality and/or sex education of single parents and their children.

Leigh Hallingby, MSW, MS
Compiler; SIECUS Librarian

FAMILY LIFE AND SEXUAL LEARNING: A STUDY OF THE ROLE OF PARENTS IN THE SEXUAL LEARNING OF CHILDREN

Volume 1: Summary Report
Volume 2: Supporting Data Analysis
Elizabeth J. Roberts, David Kline,
and John Gagnon

A major study of over 1,400 parents of 3- to 11-year-old children in Cleveland, Ohio, documenting the difficulty parents have in communicating with their children about sex. Findings on single mothers are summarized in Volume 2, pages 399-407. Marital status does not make a major difference in sex education in the family because sex education in most two-parent homes is delegated to the mother, and most of the single parents with custody are mothers.

Project on Human Sexual Development (1978), 14 Appian Way, 601 Larsen Hall, Cambridge, MA 02138; Vol. 1, \$5.00; Vol. 2, \$20.00

GOING IT ALONE: THE FAMILY LIFE AND SOCIAL SITUATION OF THE SINGLE PARENT

Robert S. Weiss

Sexuality is discussed in chapters such as "Loneliness, Sexual Need, and the Problem of Responding to Them," "Someone New," and "Personal Life and Parental Responsibility." Author discusses range of sexual feelings and experiences of single parents, backing points up with quotations from interviews. Feels parents' sexual lives generally do not appear to be of great importance to their children, especially the younger ones.

Basic Books (1979), 12 East 53rd Street, New York, NY 10022; \$13.95

LET'S MAKE SEX A HOUSEHOLD WORD

Sol Gordon

Chapter 5, entitled "The Single Parent," contains good practical advice for single parents on dealing with their children's sex education and with their own and their children's sexuality. Although this fine guide for parents is now out of print, it is available in many libraries.

The John Day Company (1975)

"MOMMY, WHO'S THAT MAN IN YOUR BED?" PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS FOR THE SURROGATE FATHER"

Barbara Wright

Sound advice to men dating women with children. Encourages openness with children about the sexual aspects of a serious involvement.

Esquire Magazine, June 5, 1979, pp. 85-87

"A NEW MAN IN THE HOUSE"

Jane Adams

Deals with dilemma many single parents face in choosing behavior that meets their needs as sexual persons and also fulfills what they perceive as their parental responsibilities. Urges single parents to use the conflict as an opportunity to explain to children the feelings, values, and responsibilities connected with sex, rather than merely transmitting the facts to them.

Working Mother Magazine, July 1979

"PARENT'S DATING: A CHILD'S REACTION"

Georgia Dullea

Quotes several experts who advise that in the matters of both dating and sex, honesty is the best policy.

New York Times, February 16, 1981, p. B6

SEX AND THE SINGLE PARENT

Jane Adams

With understanding gained from both her own experiences as a single mother and extensive interviews with single parents, their children, and partners, author Adams paints a realistic portrait of intellectual and emotional struggles. Recommended for practitioners dealing with single-parent families, as well as for the members of single-parent families themselves, including adolescents.

Coward, McCann, and Geoghegan (1978), 200 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016; \$8.95

"SHARING YOUR LESBIAN IDENTITY WITH YOUR CHILDREN: A CASE FOR OPENNESS"

Betty Berzon

Oriented toward the mother who is just evolving into a gay lifestyle or is just realizing

the possibilities for more openness with her children. Answers a woman's questions about discussing her sexual orientation and provides model answers for questions her child might ask. Also presents two case studies.

From OUR RIGHT TO LOVE: A LESBIAN RESOURCE BOOK, Ginny Vida, ed.; Prentice-Hall (1978), Englewood Cliffs, NJ 07632; \$12.95 hardcover; \$6.95 paper

SINGLE PARENTS ARE PEOPLE, TOO! HOW TO ACHIEVE A POSITIVE SELF-IMAGE AND PERSONAL SATISFACTION

Carol Vejvoda Murdock

"Your Social Life: Entertaining, Dating, and Sex" is the title of Chapter 6 in this book which is oriented toward the previously married. The author's two main messages are: You have a wide choice in your social-sexual life, and the right sexual choices for you are the ones with which you feel most comfortable. Spiced with many quotes from single parents.

Butterick Publishing (1980), 708 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017; \$9.95

SURVIVING THE BREAKUP: HOW CHILDREN AND PARENTS COPE WITH DIVORCE

Judith S. Wallerstein and Joan Berlin Kelly

In various chapters throughout the book, the authors deal with the general emergence of previously-married single parents' sexuality from behind the closed bedroom door, as well as with such specific issues as a parent's quizzing the children about the other parent's sexual activities, children consoling parents whose dating relationships end unhappily, and sexual acting-out by children reacting to stresses of divorce. Case studies cited tend to be rather negative.

Basic Books (1980), 10 East 53rd Street, New York, NY 10022; \$18.50

WIDOW

Lynn Caine

The author, who is the mother of two children, details what she learned in dealing with the return of her sexual desire after her husband's death. Discusses masturbation, and gives accounts of several unsuccessful relationships.

Bantam Books (1975), 666 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10019; \$2.25

MORAL? MAJORITY? “ . . . And This We Ask in the Name of . . . ”

As the TV screen came into focus one recent evening, the Reverend Billy Graham seemed to be speaking to me personally: “Study the world and its needs, and yourself and your gifts, and try to put the two together.” Dr. Graham described succinctly what I suddenly realized I have been trying to do for my 28 years of working life.

Seventeen years ago, the colleagues and friends with whom I co-founded SIECUS identified a major need: to help people understand and accept their sexuality as a birthright and learn how to use it in their lives. Through SIECUS, it became possible for me to couple this felt need with whatever gifts I had—of analysis, conceptualization, presentation—and with a strong concern that people should find joy and fulfillment, for themselves and their children, in their sexuality as an endowment of their humanity. Since then it has become clear that these efforts struck a chord, and much progress has occurred in looking at responsible sexuality as a basic foundation for successful living in a difficult and expanding universe.

But in the past few years, malevolent forces have been working to erode this foundation through a fabricated conspiracy designed to play on the fears of the innocent. In the name of “Christianity,” loud lies are spoken in communities and towns throughout the country, saying that children there are being made targets of

*. . . organizations that promote abortion, atheism, forced sex education in the public schools, homosexuality, pornography, and a permissive attitude toward drugs. (from *The SIECUS Circle: A Humanist Revolution*. Claire Chambers, Western Islands Press, Belmont, Mass., 1977; \$7.95, including postage. Back cover.)*

The new crop of “keepers of our morals” seemed to be echoing the same vitriolic rhetoric reminiscent of that voiced by the Christian Crusade and the John Birch Society in the late 1960s. But this time around they are quoting a book called *The SIECUS Circle*—a stockpile of ammunition for those who are moved to enlist support through lies and slander. The book’s logo is a circular pastiche of the words *sex education, drugs, evolution, women’s lib, euthanasia, ecology, and abortion*. The book is touted as “a convenient guide to humanist organizations” (humanism is defined throughout the book as “a little known philosophical movement that is increasingly influential in government, churches, schools, and the communications media”). *The SIECUS Circle* is endorsed by Max Rafferty who reminds readers that he was “one who fought SIECUS during

the ’60s in my capacity as California State Superintendent of Schools,” and states that the book “tells the truth.” A glance through this book is a real eye-opener for anyone wondering about the source of some of the venom of the Moral Majority.

As one of SIECUS’s guiding lights, I was astonished to read there that SIECUS is far more than the organization I co-founded and directed since 1964. It is at the center of a network of some 35 organizations, all under its domination for the purpose of carrying out its own nefarious aims. Included in the SIECUS Circle are such venerable groups as: • American Academy of Pediatrics • American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists • American Medical Association • American School Health Association • American Social Health Association • Family Service Association of America • Group for the Advancement of Psychiatry • National Council of Churches in the U. S. A. • National Institute of Mental Health • New Jersey State Department of Education • Planned Parenthood-World Population • United States Catholic Conference • YMCA and YWCA of the U.S.A.—to name only a few. If the thought of holding all that power is overwhelming to me, think of how it must affect citizens who trust the sources of this information!

And more than 900 individuals are cited in the text as co-conspirators, from once to 50 times, with myself holding the record. Some are SIECUS Board members and staff; others happen to have appeared on other organizations’ professional programs with SIECUS Board or staff; still others are authors whose books have been reviewed in the *SIECUS Report* or listed in one of SIECUS’s bibliographies.

The SIECUS Circle is only one voice; others compound the accusations. A full-page ad sponsored by “Christian Families in Action” in a paper called *The Baxter Bulletin* of Mountain Home, Arkansas, on December 11, 1980 carried lurid sentences in capitals: COULD HUMANISM BE MOLESTING OUR CHILDREN? ANTI-CHRIST ATTACK ON OUR CHILDREN, SEX EDUCATION: THE ASSAULT ON CHRISTIAN MORALS. And the text is full of such blatant falsehoods as “SIECUS mails out literature and sends its representatives all over the country to promote sex education programs in the schools. . . . Let’s protect our families.” The ad asked readers to attend the next school board meeting. I learned later that three members of Christian Families in Action were eventually elected to that school board.

Such hardly laughable ignorance isn’t limited to small town bulletins. The *St. Louis Globe-Democrat* carried an editorial on April 27, 1981 entitled “Humanists Undermine Parents,” which stated:

The contempt secular humanists have for parents is reflected in their writings. Mary S. Calderone, one of the leaders in pushing SIECUS . . . has written that "sex instruction in the home is usually a hit-or-miss affair, with emphasis on the miss. All too often embarrassed parents mumble platitudes to embarrassed children, while most church and educational groups shy away from discussing any but the simplest aspects of sex with young people." Mrs. Calderone then goes on to say that only SIECUS can do a proper job of educating young people all about sex, a proposition with which a great many parents strongly disagree.

"Mrs." Calderone has not been near St. Louis for several years, did not say what she is supposed to have "gone on to say," and would never agree with it, nor would anyone connected with SIECUS. Why, then, this sudden explosion of venom in a major newspaper in that city?

A *New York Times* editorial, "Armored in Ignorance," May 30, 1981, sheds light on the real purpose of such campaigns against "secular humanism":

The real target is the public school system. That there are parent groups at odds with the public schools is nothing new. But what these parent groups—backed by national organizations like Moral Majority, the Eagle Forum and the Christian Broadcasting Network—are trying to do is turn public schools into a species of private academy. The curriculum is simple: anything that is anti-God, anti-American and anti-family is out. And what is anti-God, anti-American, and anti-family? Anything these groups define as such—from books that mention divorce, to sex education, to a course in economics that explores the weaknesses as well as the strengths of capitalism.

This editorial thus underlines the purpose and sequence of the events in Mountain Home, Arkansas, described earlier.

When those who perpetuate lies in the name of preserving a moral climate thereby gain control of the schools, it is not far-fetched to predict that sex education courses (few that there are) will be joined by the social sciences, guidance counseling services, history, and literature. Such courses comprise the humanities, which most of us have rejoiced in but which could be denied to our children because of the deliberately maintained confusion of the term "humanities" with humanism—nay, *secular* humanism, which in fact does not even exist. Needless to say, libraries will also be devastated.

Speaking Out, Continued from page 3

communicate positive messages about it to the children, and must consider this in deciding what is appropriate with regard to both the relationship and the children. On the other hand, someone who experiences no conflict between internalized belief and sexual behavior will probably find that children respond comfortably to a parent who is feeling good about him/herself as a sexual person, in whatever way that feeling is or is not expressed. Once the parent has clarified his/her own attitude, dealing with the children is greatly simplified.

The second important task applies to all parents, single or double, and that is: to determine what messages about sexuality they want to communicate to their children, what values they would like them to grow up with. This forms a foundation from which the parents can make decisions about their own behavior: If I do this, what does it communicate to my chil-

Therefore it can be further anticipated that schools in many communities will be seriously disrupted or quietly undermined before realization dawns. I quail to think that eventually it might even happen that children might be given class assignments to bring in lists of the books and magazines being read by their parents at home. Suddenly, shockingly, I remember Nazi Germany.

I am personally angered that a satanic effigy has been created in the name of Mary Calderone, and used to bulldoze and frighten the unwary. As a religious person, I am sickened that all of this is done "in the name of" the one whose New Testament precepts directly contradict the hatred, anger, superstition, mythology, and destructiveness invoked—provoked?—by the Moral Majority, the Eagle Forum, and the Christian Broadcasting Network and their followers. Remembering the Ninth Commandment against bearing false witness, I am not only angered but dismayed. No ends, however noble, could be justified by such means, and in this case, the ends are not noble but are a form of religious power politics that adults might shrug off but that would be dangerously threatening to the future well-being of children in our land.

Professionals in the helping disciplines—the thoughtful, the rational, the logical, the educated, the non-venal, the non-religiously political, the non-politically religious—should seriously involve themselves within their own communities to state the truths, refute the lies, and insistently demand original sources of misstatements. Education and social structure once destroyed may require a generation or more to rebuild.

The need to counter these destructive forces is clear. Thank you again, Dr. Graham, for giving me the words: Whatever "gifts"—and years—may still be left to me I shall continue to "put together" with that need for as long as I am able.

MIKE WALLACE INTERVIEWS MARY CALDERONE ON CBS "60 MINUTES"

Sunday, October 4 or October 11

during

National Family Sexuality Education Week

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dren? Is that consistent with what I want them to get from me? Can my children and I live with the consequences?

The latest census figures indicate that of the 30 million families in the U. S. with children under 18, 81% are headed by married couples, 17% (more than 5 million) by single mothers, and 2% (600,000) by single fathers. These data do not include the "non-custody" or co-parents, whose continuing interaction with the child must also be considered. It is appalling to me that in this new decade following the 1979 International Year of the Child there is such a lag in recognizing and responding to the needs of this significant portion of our current society—the single-parent family. In a July 1981 *New York Times*-CBS poll, 48% of those interviewed (the largest single category) said that the most important thing that parents can give a child is love. To this, I add my own post script: The parent who *feels* love can give love more fully.

AUDIO-VISUAL REVIEWS

THREE-DIMENSIONAL RESOURCES FOR SEXUALITY EDUCATION

Reviewed by Deryck D. Calderwood, PhD, Director, Human Sexuality Program, New York University; member, SIECUS Board of Directors.

Audio-visual resources are important tools in education for sexuality, but instructional aids come in other formats as well. In this issue we are including reviews of three-dimensional models that have been widely tested and proven to be excellent resources. In future issues we will include other examples of creative teaching aids.

Three-dimensional dolls that can be used in teaching basic sexual anatomy, human reproduction, and birth are available from two sources:

Effie Dolls are a set of handmade 18" male and female mannequins that come both in Caucasian or Black likenesses. The male doll not only has genitals but a condom to go with them. The female doll is pregnant and included with her is a baby with an umbilical cord and placenta. She also comes with a sanitary belt useful for menstruation education. At \$50.00 a pair, these dolls are available from: Effie Hutchins, 4812 48th Avenue, Moline, IL 61265.

Natalie and Bertha Rags are also birthing dolls. Bertha, a monkey with a baby, is designed for small children. Velcro on the mama monkey's breasts and arms makes it possible for the baby to be held and breastfed. Natalie, for those who feel they can skip the animal stage in explaining birth to children and go directly to human birth, is a 22" female rag doll. Natalie is equipped to illustrate the birth process (detachable cord and placenta are included) and even a cesarean section if desired. Kits to make these dolls are also available. Bertha complete sells for \$24.50; Natalie for \$26.00. They are available from: Monkey Business, Box 2603, Tallahassee, FL 32304.

The dolls are excellent educational resources. No one, at any age, can resist handling and playing with them. Far less clinical than charts and picture books on

anatomy and birth, they allow for much more active involvement and stimulate questions in a relaxed and natural manner. They have application to a wide range of individuals and groups of both sexes and all ages interested in anatomy and reproduction.

Sperm + Ovum = Baby. An exhibit. Institute for Relationship Education, 6 Willow Street, Princeton, NJ 08540. Price, \$2,750.

This is a large, free-standing walk-around display which describes the effectiveness of seven methods of contraception. In the center of the hexagonal structure are life-size wire-sculpture male and female figures which, in addition to serving as integral pieces of the multi-panel presentation, attract attention as art objects as well. There are also wonderful, large, soft-sculpture representations of an active sperm, a ripe

ovum, and a fetal child. These three-dimensional pieces are creatively done in a gently humorous and artistic style. The outside panels are eye-catching and provide the observer with the contraceptive information as s/he walks around the entire display. Agencies and organizations with an interest in family planning will find this an effective audience attractor. It is ideal for waiting rooms, student centers, and conferences to promote personal decision-making about contraceptive use.

Models of Human Genital Anatomy. Jim Jackson and Co., 33 Richdale Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02140.

The basic Jackson models have been reviewed previously (see *SIECUS Report*, November 1978), but the improvements and additional models make them worthy of a current assessment. These three-dimensional, lifesize replicas of the male and female genitals are now made from a new latex formula that makes them softer with a more realistic feeling of flesh. The models are available unpainted, painted, or with synthetic pubic hair. They are sophisticated, functional, and remarkably lifelike. On the vaginal model with uterus the following can be identified: the labia (majora and minora), clitoris with hood, urethral opening, hymenal scars, pubococcygeus muscle, uterus, cervix, fallopian tubes, and ovaries. The urethra allows for the insertion of a catheter, and the vagina will accommodate a speculum or the erect penis model.

The male model allows exploration of both external and internal anatomy. The front includes a circumcised pre-aroused penis with scrotum and testicles. The back makes possible inspection of the vas deferens, seminal vesicles, prostate (the anus and rectal lining enable one to use a finger for examination of the prostate), bladder, and Cowpers glands. There are also cross-sectional cutaway models of the genitals and a set that depicts a pregnant uterus with embryo just implanted, embryo at six weeks, and fetus at 12 and 24 weeks. All the models are anatomically accurate and are an excellent resource for

Continued on Page 11

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WHERE THE ACTION IS

Sexuality and Disability: Third Annual National Symposium

Nancy Esibill, PhD
Assistant Professor, Department of Rehabilitation Counseling,
New York University;
Symposium Coordinator (with Deryck Calderwood, PhD);
member, SIECUS Board of Directors

The Third Annual National Symposium on Sexuality and Disability was held at New York University, June 19–21, 1981, continuing the impetus established by the first two symposia sponsored by the University of California at San Francisco. This year the International Year of Disabled Persons theme of “full participation and equality” was applied to the study of the sexual health care needs of the disabled. Over 250 health practitioners, consumers, and educators, both able-bodied and disabled, met to examine such issues as the current status of the disabled with regard to social opportunity, choice of lifestyle, sex education, sexual expression and responsibility; and to attend paper presentations and participate in panel discussions and all-day workshops focusing on aspects of sexuality and disability.

Organized by New York University's School of Health, Education, Nursing, and Arts Professions, the Human Sexuality Program of the Department of Psychiatry, University of California at San Francisco, and the Coalition on Sexuality and Disability, the symposium drew wide sponsorship and support from organizations such as SIECUS, Planned Parenthood of New York City, United Cerebral Palsy of New York City, and the Task Force on Sexuality and Disability of the American Congress of Rehabilitation Medicine.

The faculty of the symposium included national and international representation of the current research, needs, and developments in the sexual health care of the disabled. Reflecting the broad range of interest and advances in this field was an exhibit area illustrating publications, films, assistive devices, anatomical models, contraceptive aids, and counseling services geared to the needs of people with disabilities.

Paper presentations at the symposium represented concerns, developments, techniques, and training approaches and research from all parts of the country. Issues discussed included sexuality of individuals with mental retardation, deafness, alcoholism, rheumatic diseases, blindness, quadriplegia, cystectomy, and cardiac surgery. Roundtable discussions focused on the use of sexual aids and anatomical models, implications for family therapy for those with communication disorders, and legal issues in sexuality for the disabled.

Expanding on the models of the first two national symposia, this year's conference was able to offer preconference workshops on networking for disabled women, grantsmanship, and sexual health care advocacy. Also, for the first time, participants joined one of several all-day workshops covering

such topics as mainstreaming sexual health care, sexual exploitation of the disabled, sexual function in pre- and postadolescent progressive and stable conditions, sexuality and the mentally handicapped, training issues with special populations, and the use of visuals in sexuality and disability education. Preliminary review of evaluations of the symposium reveals that the conference was highly successful in meeting many of the needs and goals of the registrants, i.e., to share and obtain resources, knowledge, and skills related to working with the disabled in the area of sexuality.

It is clear from the support, interest, and range of participation that sexual health care for the disabled is an issue that currently is being addressed as integral to rehabilitation, habilitation, and education programs for those with temporary and permanent disabilities. Recognition of this fact becomes more evident with each subsequent symposium, as do the efforts to network and disseminate what we know, what we are doing, what we need, what is effective and what is not. While the details of the Fourth Symposium are not yet finalized, the support and demand for one are strong.

Copies of most of the proceedings of the Third Annual National Symposium on Sexuality and Disability are available on audio cassettes. For an order form and price list, write to: Cassette Duplication Company, 5 Beekman Street, Suite 311, New York, NY 10038.

[Details of the Fourth Symposium will be announced in future issues of the SIECUS Report—Ed.]

DO YOU KNOW THAT . . .

Resources to Write for . . .

Sex for the Handicapped Man: An Educational Booklet by Weldon Leon Sutton (1981) is an illustrated, self-help manual written at a 6th-grade reading level, printed in large type, and tabbed for easy reference. Although the drawings are oriented toward people with cerebral palsy, the text is applicable for the disabled in general. Chapter titles include: “How to Relax,” “Masturbation,” “Foreplay,” and “Ask Questions.” To order, send \$15.00 (plus \$1.00 postage and handling) to: Self-Help Manual, 8595 Conway Drive, Riverside, CA 92504.

LEGAL ISSUES

"Legal Issues" is prepared by Ralph Slovenko, LLB, PhD, Professor of Law and Psychiatry, Wayne State University School of Law, Detroit, Mich.; author, *Psychiatry and Law* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1973).

The Impact of Sexual Life-Style on Child Custody

Child custody or visitation is based on the "best interests of the child." The question arises: Is the sexual life-style of a parent in and of itself or in conjunction with other factors a relevant consideration? About this there are conflicting viewpoints, but the courts as a rule tend to avoid enunciating a decision based on life-style but give some other less controversial reason. The extent to which judges rely on their personal values and experience in deciding child custody (or other cases) is anyone's guess, but decisions in general seem to reflect traditional values. The scales of justice are tipped on the side of the spouse whose life-style is considered more "normal" and "moral."

The Iowa Supreme Court in the famous case of *Painter v. Bannister* [140 N.W.2d 152 (Iowa 1966)] found itself embroiled in controversy when it commented upon the father's style of life instead of focusing, as many say it should have done, on the relationship that the child had developed with the maternal grandparents. In this case Hal Painter placed his 7-year-old son, Mark, with the Bannisters, the maternal grandparents, following the accidental death of the boy's mother. Four years later, having remarried, the father sought to regain custody. The psychological report submitted to the court indicated that the child's previous relationship with his father was unclear and that he had established a sound relationship with the grandparents. The court, however, looked not at the relationship that had developed with the grandparents but instead focused on the father's "Bohemian life" and denied him custody. Many observers while agreeing with the decision protested the rationale.

The phrase "best interests of the child" is magnanimous, but what criteria or evidence do the courts use in reaching that decision? Legislation has been enacted on criteria. Michigan in its Child Custody Act of 1970, the first statute to

set out criteria, defines "best interests of the child" as the sum total of designated factors to be considered, evaluated, and determined by the court. Paraphrasing, these are: (1) emotional ties of the parties and the child, (2) capacity and disposition of the parties to rear the child, (3) capacity of the parties to provide for the child's material needs, (4) time the child has spent in a stable environment, and continuity of that, (5) permanence of the existing custodial home, (6) moral fitness of the parties, (7) physical and mental health of the parties, (8) child's home and school records, (9) preference of the child, if available, (10) the willingness of the parent to facilitate visitation with the other, and (11) other relevant factors. The Michigan legislation, though replete with terms as elastic as a rubber band, has nevertheless served as a paradigm in other states. The legislation purports to provide standards, but the trial judge under it has broad direction in rendering a decision.

It is not likely that courts will speak out from their hearts as the Iowa Supreme Court did in *Painter v. Bannister*. But should courts in child custody disputes even hear evidence of sexual behavior or orientation? Is it relevant to a determination of "best interests"? The courts do not rule out the evidence as a matter of law. They hear it, and they sometimes expressly base their decision on that ground. The expert testimony in these cases is conflicting (no less than in cases of criminal responsibility). For example, in a case where a lesbian mother and her estranged husband battled for custody of their daughters, one child psychologist advised the court that the children should remain with the mother, provided her lover move out of the house. A psychiatrist, who called homosexuality a "character disorder," recommended the children be placed in the custody of their father. Another psychologist also said the mother's lover should not remain in the house if the children were

to stay there. [*Detroit Free Press*, June 16, 1977, p.3.] The American Psychological Association in a resolution adopted a few years ago suggested that "the sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation of natural or prospective adoptive or foster parents should not be the sole or *primary variable* considered in child custody or placement cases" [emphasis added]. At the same time the Conference of Delegates of the California State Bar Association disapproved a resolution which recommended that a parent's marital status or sexual orientation should never be considered in child custody litigation. [R. Slovenko, "Homosexuality and the Law: From Condemnation to Celebration," in J. Marmor (ed.), *Homosexual Behavior/A Modern Reappraisal* (New York: Basic Books, 1980), p. 194.]

It is estimated that there are now in the United States about 300 contested custody cases a year involving an avowed homosexual partner. In some cases, homosexual mothers have been given custody under certain conditions, such as that they not maintain contacts with other homosexuals or that they and their lovers maintain separate bedrooms. Those who flaunt their gay life-style are not likely to be awarded custody. Membership in an organization advocating and proselytizing for homosexuality is highly prejudicial.

The courts may be less concerned with sexual conduct, be it heterosexual or homosexual, than they once were, but not entirely. [*Schuster v. Schuster*, 585 P.2d 130 (Wash. 1978).] The Nebraska Supreme Court said a few years ago in a case where the mother was living with a male friend: "We have long passed the point where sexual misconduct automatically disqualifies the mother from obtaining custody of her minor children." The Court went on to say: "We are . . . aware of the drastically changing life styles and the casualness with which intimate relations are entered and ended." But at the same time the Court expressed

disapproval of the mother's life-style. The custody award to her was saved by a declaration made by her that she would not again live with her boyfriend outside of marriage or live with him in marriage in the same bedroom with the children. [Greenfield v. Greenfield, 260 N.W.2d 493 (Neb. 1977).]

The Illinois Supreme Court in the much publicized case of *Jarrett v. Jarrett* [400 N.E.2d 421 (Ill. 1979)] upheld a decision to deprive Jacqueline Jarrett of custody of her two daughters because she was cohabiting with a man. The chief issue in the case was whether a change of custody could be predicated upon the open and continuing cohabitation of the custodial parent with a member of the opposite sex. The Court, citing the criminal law on fornication, held that the best interests of the teenage children would be better served in a more "moral" environment. Jacqueline argued that her conduct did not affront public morality because such conduct is now widely accepted, citing Census Bureau statistics that show 1.1 million households composed of an unmarried man and woman, close to a quarter of which also include at least one child. The Court found the argument unpersuasive. The Court said: "[Fornication among unmarrieds], when it is open, not only violates the statutorily expressed moral standards of the State, but also encourages others to violate those standards, and debases public morality. While we agree that the statute does not penalize [fornication] which is essentially private and discreet, Jacqueline's conduct has been neither, for she has discussed this relationship and her rationalization of it with at least her children, her former husband and her neighbors. It is, in our judgment, clear that her conduct offends prevailing public policy . . . [T]he values which Jacqueline currently represents to her children, and those which she may be expected to portray to them in the future, contravene statutorily declared standards of conduct and endanger the children's moral development." [400 N.E.2d at 424-425.]

To put the matter in perspective, it must be noted that court fights over custody occur in only about one out of ten cases. When the spouses agree on custody, which usually occurs, the court will as a rule ratify the decision without looking into the details of their lives. It is technically possible for a state agency to seek to remove a child from the custody of a promiscuous or homosexual parent but this has rarely if ever occurred.

A-V Reviews, Continued from page 8 teachers, counselors, and therapists. With these realistic models it is suggested that their use at the secondary school level be considered carefully by administrative and educational staff and representatives from the community. To receive an illustrated catalogue, write to Jim Jackson and Co. at the above address.

Superbaby Parenting Kit. Filmstrip with audio cassette, 12 min. Includes Teacher's Guide and resource list; 10 activity sheet masters; and two educational wall charts. Price, \$44.25. Perennial Education, Inc., 477 Roger Williams, P. O. Box 855 Ravinia, Highland Park, IL 60035.

Reviewed by Leigh Hallingby, MSW, MS, SIECUS Librarian.

The primary purpose of the Superbaby Parenting Kit is to impress upon young people (junior high age and up) the serious responsibilities of pregnancy, childbirth, and parenthood *before* they conceive children. The kit could also be used successfully with college and adult groups in a variety of settings. The instructor is provided with a range of materials, including activity sheets which may be reproduced in quantity for distribution; two wall charts, one showing fetal growth and development and the other listing suggestions to follow toward having a healthy baby; a sound-filmstrip providing an overview of the current approach to pregnancy management and birth; and an audio cassette which emphasizes the feelings of the pregnant woman.

The strength of this program lies in the large variety of creative group activities outlined, including questions and topics for class discussion; tests; and suggestions for the selection of outside speakers, student research projects, and field trips. Individuals who complete a majority of the recommended activities will undoubtedly have had an enjoyable learning experience, know a great deal about pregnancy and birth, and have a healthy respect for the responsibilities involved in parenthood. The audiovisual materials are a somewhat weaker aspect of the kit. In some places they lack warmth and smoothness of transition, and the filmstrip has a rather white, middle-class orientation. In the hands of a skilled instructor, however, they could also be useful learning and discussion tools.

One final comment: The Superbaby Parenting Kit strongly emphasizes breastfeeding as the best choice for the baby. This may be unfair to young women who must return to school or work soon after delivery or who feel strongly about sharing the feeding responsibility with their partner. In the latter case, of course, responsibility can be shared if the father gets up at the night feeding to change and bring the baby to the mother, or in the evening lies down to cradle both mother and baby in his arms during feeding.

Breastfeeding: A Special Closeness. 16 mm, video cassette, color, 23 min. Price, \$350; rental, \$40. Motion Inc., 3138 Highland Place, NW, Washington, DC 20008.

Reviewed by Roseminda Santee, RN, MA, candidate for Master's degree, Human Sexuality Program, New York University; Instructor in Maternity Nursing, Christ Hospital School of Nursing, Jersey City, N.J.

This film, which presents the values of breastfeeding for the infant and the mother, discusses the advantages of breastfeeding and breast milk in terms of the nutritive value, transfer of passive immunity from mother to infant, maintenance of close maternal-infant bond, economy, and convenience. The film also addresses some common concerns related to breastfeeding such as physical problems involving inverted nipples, soreness, and engorgement, with some practical solutions offered. Situational problems of concern to people such as the working mother who breastfeeds and the issue of modesty when nursing in public are presented. Cross-cultural acceptance of this method of infant feeding is explored through interviews with white, Black, and Hispanic women and their families.

One of the film's strong points is the encouragement for breastfeeding expressed and demonstrated by the husbands. There is also mention of a volunteer community group, La Lèche League, which is very active in providing information and support to breastfeeding mothers. This film, with its accompanying teacher's guide, is an excellent instructional tool. It is strongly recommended for expectant parent classes, family life courses, Maternal-Child Nursing, continuing education programs, and any program where parent-infant relationships are to be explored.

DO YOU KNOW THAT . . .

Call for Papers

The Sixth International Conference on Venereal Disease, Family Planning, and Human Sexuality will be held June 21-28, 1982, in Mexico City. Those interested in presenting a paper at this conference should request further information from Frederick S. Mayer, Pharmacists Planning Service, P. O. Box 1336, Sausalito, CA 94966. The deadline for submitting abstracts is November 30, 1981.

SSSS Annual Meeting

For its annual meeting, November 20-22, 1981, at the Sheraton Centre in New York City, the Society for the Scientific Study of Sex, Inc. has chosen the theme "Toward Integration and Collaboration." The convention's symposia, workshops, panel discussions, and films will be responsive to the interdisciplinary character of the field of sexology and the diverse concerns of sexologists. Registration information can be obtained from Deborah Weinstein, Executive Director, SSSS, 417 Meadowbrook Drive, Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006.

New Program for Homosexual Adolescents

The Center for Family Living in Van Nuys, California, has instituted a new program, "Coping with Differences," for homosexual adolescents and their families. The focus is on strengthening the family, promoting understanding, and furthering effective communication among all its members. Contact Charlotte Spitzer, Project Coordinator, Center for Family Living, 14530 Hamlin Street, Van Nuys, CA 91405, for additional details.

Resources to Write for . . .

In God's Image . . . Male and Female is a 1980 study on human sexuality by the Division of Mission for the General Council of the United Church in Canada. As stated in the foreword, this study on human sexuality is not a policy statement of the United Church of Canada nor an attempt to tell people what to believe or do. It is an attempt to "provide ways to understand one's own sexual experience, reflect on it in the light of the gospel, and of modern knowledge, and examine our own beliefs." The six chapters discuss "Sexuality—What Is and What Might Be," "Sexuality and the Bible," "On Being Sexual Persons," "Expressing Our Sexuality," "Sexism," and "Sexuality and Persons In Particular Circumstances." The conclusion presents some theological assumptions and some issues and recommendations involved in human sexuality concerns. Single copies cost \$3.75 (Canadian) and are distributed by The Book Room, 85 St. Clair Avenue East, Toronto, Ontario M4T 1M8, Canada.

Foundation for Decision Making: A VD Teaching Guide, a 1979 publication of the American Council for Healthful Living, is a unique and valuable resource. It covers K-12 curriculum, and presents teaching techniques which deal with the topic of venereal disease as a natural extension of communicable disease education. Included are activities, illustrations and charts, tests, and a 6-page glossary. To order a copy, send \$8.50 (includes postage) to: American Council for Healthful Living, 439 Main Street, Orange, NJ 07050.

The Journal of Social Issues, Vol. 36, No. 1, Winter 1980, which is devoted to the topic "Teenage Parenting: Social Determinants and Consequences" and edited by Howard B. Gallas, contains an excellent selection of pertinent articles. Of special interest because the topic is not often covered separately is the article entitled "The Adolescent Father's Impact on the Mother and Child" by Ross D. Parke, Thomas G. Power, and Teresa Fisher. Single copies of this issue cost \$8.00 from: Journal of Social Issues, P.O. Box 1248, Ann Arbor, MI 48106.

Getting Together, by Debra Cornelius, Elaine Makas, and Sophia Chipouras, is a 20-page booklet about attitudinal barriers toward the sexuality of disabled people. It discusses the major myths surrounding the topic, and illustrates through five representative stories how to deal with preconceived ideas about sexuality and disability. Order single copies at 50¢ each from: RRR1-ALLB Publications, 1828 L Street, NW, Suite 704, Washington, DC 20036.

Sex Education in Early Adolescence: A Literature Search is an annotated bibliography of approximately 325 books and articles published on this topic from 1966 through June 1979, produced for the Katharine Dexter McCormick Library of Planned Parenthood Federation of America. To obtain a copy, send \$5.00 to Education Department, PPAFA, 810 Seventh Avenue, New York, NY 10019.

Rehabilitation Psychology, Vol. 25, No. 2, 1978, is entirely devoted to "Sex and Disability: A Selected Bibliography," compiled by M. G. Eisenberg. Unannotated, it contains references for publications which have appeared in the literature from 1942 to 1978, and includes a three-page listing of films and audio-recordings. Copies of this back issue cost \$5.00 each, from Rehabilitation Psychology, Business Office, P.O. Box 26034, Tempe, AZ 85282.

Signs for Sexuality, published by Planned Parenthood of Seattle/King County, is a resource manual for teachers, counselors, interpreters, parents, and hearing-impaired persons concerned with deafness and sexuality. It contains over 600 photographs illustrating 312 signed words and phrases associated with human sexuality, and also includes definitions of terms. To receive a copy, send \$11.95 to Planned Parenthood, 2211 East Madison Street, Seattle, WA 98112.

Single Parenthood, Continued from page 2

Time-worn images work against us: There is the good mother, cooking at the stove, attending community functions, certainly not getting dressed to go on a date or crying over the break-up of a love affair. It is the collision of what we were raised to be and what we have become. "I know I have made the right choices for myself," one woman states, "but I still tend to pass the myths on to my children, hoping that things will turn out right for them." The feeling of not quite living up to the rules creates discomfort for single parents in their handling of new sexual partners and leads to murkiness as they try to communicate values about sexual conduct to their children. "My daughter said to me, 'If you can have someone sleep over, why can't I?' I told her there are rules for 15-year-olds and rules for 35-year-olds—two different sets—and the answer is no." This mother, when confronted, fell back on sheer authority. The matter was settled, but the incident left her shaken.

What becomes apparent is that no guide book has been written to help face these day-to-day tests. The traditional pattern of transmission of manners and morals from one generation to the next does not apply, and new codes for living must be shaped. Thus reliance on others who live similar lives becomes crucial. For many, the single-parent discussion group is the first step toward resocialization. The focus on parenthood provides a protective security which a "singles bar" cannot. In some sense, the group involvement, as at our Center, is a practicing ground where the newly single parent can relearn the skills of making friendships and forming relationships. Children, learning that they are not the only ones with one parent, see that a variety of loving friendships is possible, and soon understand that there is a circle of reliable, caring adults who are aware of their particular family-life situation and are

available for support and sharing. These associations often expand beyond the group itself: "I felt particularly forlorn when I looked around the table and saw an empty chair. And I wondered if my kids felt this, too. So, I invited another parent and child from the group and we all had a great time."

Unlike many self-help groups which seek to engage members on a permanent basis, the mutual support groups sponsored at the Project serve as way-stations for most members. Parents are welcomed, enabled to regain equilibrium in an accepting atmosphere of peers, and encouraged to move on to other interests when feeling confident enough to do so. "Our real success comes," says one worker, "when a parent announces that he/she won't be coming much any more—school, a new job, a solid relationship, or some other good life happening intervenes. Then we know they're back on the track."

It is apparent that what I have written here is not intended to be a definitive study of single parenthood. Rather, it is an introduction to an urgent problem demanding attention from professionals of all kinds—sexologists, psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers, social anthropologists. We need to know more about so many things, including the specific subject of professional interest to readers of the *SIECUS Report*: the ramifications of sexuality in the changing lives of the single parent and his/her family. In the meantime, we offer our help. In the view of the Single Parent Family Project, single parenthood is a second chance, an opportunity to make a new beginning, to rejoin the world, and to shape a life determined by one's own interests and needs as well as by those of one's children—built around concepts of a new kind of loving and living, a non-restrictive and enhanced sharing of the human adventure.

**To former subscribers
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AN IMPORTANT NOTICE

Beginning with this issue, the *SIECUS Report* is available only to SIECUS Associates, as announced in the May/July issue. If, prior to this change of policy, you had already sent your renewal to our former distributor, Human Sciences Press, be assured that we are processing your order.

To those of you who have not yet renewed and want to continue receiving the SIECUS Report:

This issue has been sent as a courtesy, but to receive the remainder of the volume, here is the new procedure: Choose the appropriate Associate category as listed below and send the indicated fee directly to SIECUS. (Do not send a renewal to Human Sciences Press.)

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SIECUS's new address, effective September 1, 1981:

SIECUS
80 Fifth Avenue
Suite 801-2
New York, NY 10011
Phone: (212) 929-2300

Other Address Changes

Two other sexuality organizations have recently announced address changes. Letters to the Society for the Scientific Study of Sex should be sent to: SSSS, Deborah Weinstein, Executive Director, 417 Meadowbrook Drive, Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006; for the American Association of Sex Educators, Counselors, and Therapists, to: AASECT, William A. Granzig, Executive Director, 600 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20024.

BOOK REVIEWS

Homosexuality and Ethics. Edward Batchelor, Jr., ed. New York: Pilgrim Press, 1980 (261 pp.; \$10.95).

Reviewed by Letha Scanzoni, professional writer in social issues and religion, Greensboro, N.C.; coauthor with Virginia Ramey Mollenkott of Is the Homosexual My Neighbor? (Harper & Row, 1978), and with John Scanzoni of the college textbook, Men, Women, and Change: A Sociology of Marriage and Family (McGraw-Hill, 2nd edition, 1981).

The "homosexual issue" is one of those "questions of public morality" in which "there exists an interface between civil politics, the law, the mental health professions, and the religious institutions of society," writes the editor of this informative anthology. Traditionally, attitudes and sanctions within this interface have been mutually reinforcing. But what happens in the religious arena as shifts occur in the other areas? In his words: "If consensual homosexual acts taking place in private are no longer prosecuted as crimes in an ever-increasing number of jurisdictions in the English-speaking world, and if homosexuality, as such, is not classified as a pathological condition by the leadership of the two professional organizations of American psychiatrists and psychologists, what do the Jewish and Christian religious institutions of our society have to say about the *moral* questions? In sum, is homosexuality a sin?" (italics added).

The manner in which thoughtful theologians and ethicists are wrestling with that question should interest everyone who has ever been confronted with religious considerations when homosexuality is discussed (for example, in counseling a religiously devout gay person struggling with guilt; or in community disputes about how the topic of homosexuality is handled in sex education classes; or when civil rights ordinances prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation are proposed, and newspapers are suddenly

bombarded with Bible-quoting letters to the editor).

Edward Batchelor, Jr., chaplain and lecturer in religion at Brooklyn College, has provided a valuable service by assembling this collection of previously published essays covering the wide spectrum of Jewish, Protestant, and Roman Catholic views on homosexuality. He suggests that the views of religious thinkers fall under four major classifications: (1) homosexual acts are "intrinsically evil"; (2) homosexual acts are "essentially imperfect"; (3) homosexual acts are to be evaluated in terms of their relational significance; and (4) homosexual acts are natural and good. The essays are reprinted primarily from books and journals published in the 1960s and 1970s. An exception is by Saint Thomas Aquinas of the 13th century, whose natural law approach has greatly influenced Roman Catholic moral theology.

Batchelor's classification schema is helpful in alerting readers to the way responsible religious ethicists go about their task and reach their diverse conclusions. The methodology does not depend upon the recitation of Scripture in a simplistic "proof-text" manner, but rather on careful reasoning and scholarship. Recurrent themes dealt with in this process of reasoning seem to be natural law (as it relates to the design of the genitals and the assumed procreative purpose of sexuality), the ideal of completeness (defined in terms of male-female complementarity), the question of choice and freedom in matters of sexual orientation, and the meaning of an ethic based on love. A number of the essays discuss the relatively few Scripture passages that refer to homosexual acts, and readers are informed of the cultural and historical contexts that must be considered in interpreting such passages. Jewish and Christian tradition are also weighed, as are insights from the behavioral and social sciences.

Before presenting materials representative of his four classifications, Batche-

lor provides a concise introductory overview of changing societal attitudes over the past 30 years and the challenge this has meant to the religious community—not only in rethinking homosexuality in the abstract but in recognizing pastoral responsibility toward homosexual persons. An opening section called "Toward a New Homosexual Ethic" underscores the need to respond to the *personhood* of homosexual men and women. In this section are five thoughtful essays by Protestant theologians Roger Shinn and Tom Driver, Roman Catholic theologians Gregory Baum and Rosemary Ruether, and an anonymous Jewish homosexual person who asks, "Must homosexuals be Jewish outcasts?"

The position that "homosexual acts are 'intrinsically evil'" is presented in two parts. *Traditionalist* reasoning in this classification is represented in materials by Saint Thomas Aquinas, Protestant theologian Karl Barth, and Robert Gordis of the Jewish Theological Seminary faculty in New York City. These scholars hold in common the belief that males and females were created to complement one another; thus, homosexuality flouts the Creator's will. The *Neo-Traditionalist* school of thought likewise holds that homosexual acts are "intrinsically evil" by similarly stressing the complementarity of the sexes, but the reasoning is based more upon psychological theories and societal concerns than on theology. Here, Ruth Tiffany Barnhouse speaks of homosexuality as a "symbolic confusion" that goes against "wholeness" and also indicates immaturity. William Muehl worries about harm to the human psyche and to society (especially marriage and the family) if homosexuality is considered acceptable. And John G. Milhaven argues that the "new morality" based on a love ethic should condemn homosexuality because the homosexual person is not loving as he or she ought to love, but is loving in an immature and disordered manner. In stressing homosexuality as pathology,

Audience Level Indicators: C—Children (elementary grades), ET—Early teens (junior high), LT—Late teens (senior high), A—College, general adult public, P—Parents, PR—Professionals.

Milhaven cites a statement by Isadore Rubin in the 1965 *SIECUS Study Guide* No. 2 as evidence that most specialists consider homosexual persons to be "mentally ill or neurotic" and in an immature state of development. Milhaven fails to report adequately the tone and context of Rubin's remarks and his emphasis on the sharp contention over homosexuality that was even then occurring among psychologists and psychiatrists.

Representing the viewpoint that "homosexual acts are 'essentially imperfect'" are Charles Curran, Helmut Thielicke, H. Kimball Jones, and Hershel Matt. These writers consider heterosexual relating to be the norm. But they are persuaded that some persons have little or no choice in their homosexual orientation and thus must be encouraged in responsible living, even though they "fall short" of the heterosexual ideal. Jones, for example, speaks of homosexual persons not as "sinful" or "sick," but as "sexually handicapped."

The third stance on homosexuality is represented by the 1973 report of the Episcopal Diocese of Michigan, the 1963 British Friends Home Service Committee Report, and an essay by Anglican theologian W. Norman Pittenger. These writings emphasize that the determining factor in evaluating the morality of homosexual acts is the nature and quality of the homosexual *relationship* in which such acts take place. "Homosexual affection can be as selfless as heterosexual affection, and therefore we cannot see that it is in some way morally worse," say the writers of the British Friends Home Service Committee Report.

The final position is the assertion that "homosexual acts are natural and good." In this section, Michael Valente calls for a new sexual ethic, springing from a new attitude toward sexuality in general that is already emerging. Calling for a new *homosexual* ethic specifically, Neale Secor states that an "ethical response that moves from thoughtless repression toward enlightened tolerance" is not enough. And Robert Wood suggests that homosexuality could be a God-ordained way of protecting the human race "from the suicide of overpopulation."

The concluding section of the book includes critiques on ethical reasoning written by Charles Curran, James Nelson, Theodore Jennings, and Lisa Sowle Cahill. They explore the ways various ethicists have approached the issue of

homosexuality and the conclusions they have reached. These critiques were not written especially for this book but were previously published elsewhere. However, many of the theological/ethical writings and thinkers discussed are among those Batchelor has included in this anthology. Outstanding in this section is the essay by James B. Nelson from his book, *Embodiment* (1978).

Finally, *Homosexuality and Ethics* contains a useful appendix listing brief statements on homosexuality by various religious bodies and by four professional organizations (the American Bar Association, the American Medical Association, the American Psychiatric Association, and the American Psychological Association).

I know of no other book that brings together such a vast array of religious thought on the topic. Religious leaders, educators, and counselors will find it highly useful in reaching a greater understanding of the issues involved in today's frequent (and often heated) debates over homosexuality, religious beliefs, and ethical considerations. **A, PR**

Teenage Pregnancy: The Problem That Hasn't Gone Away. New York: The Alan Guttmacher Institute, 1981 (79 pp.; \$5.00).

Reviewed by Robert A. Embree, PhD, Professor in Psychology, Westmar College, Le Mars, Iowa.

Today's parents and, indeed, society in general have considerable interest in the sexual patterns of teenagers. Some worry about the risks of sexually transmitted diseases. Others are concerned about family values and societal reactions when teenage sexual activity becomes public knowledge. Most are aware of the high personal and social cost of unwanted and unintentional pregnancy. The new Alan Guttmacher Institute publication, *Teenage Pregnancy: The Problem That Hasn't Gone Away*, will most certainly increase public consciousness about the hazards of growing up sexually in America and will go a long way toward dispelling myths about the innocence of youth.

The quality report, sensitive to the problems and needs of young people, draws upon data from numerous individuals, agencies, and institutions. The end result is a comprehensive summary of a national problem that requires a positive and sympathetic response. To

ignore the message of this report is unthinkable.

By age 13-14, 6% of girls and 18% of boys have already experienced sexual intercourse. For young people leaving their teens the percentages have risen to 70% for girls and 80% for boys. In other words, only 2 out of 10 males and 3 out of 10 females remain sexually inexperienced. According to the report, teenagers today are more frequently using *some* birth control method, including withdrawal; however, with first intercourse, use of no method at all is typical. Likewise nearly two-thirds of unwed teenage females never or inconsistently use contraception. These females rarely report intentions to get pregnant. Non-use of contraceptives is largely due to a belief that pregnancy cannot occur at a particular time, or to the fact that intercourse was unanticipated.

Some in our society argue that availability of birth control information and services encourages young people to become sexually active. On the contrary, birth control information has definitely had an impact on teenagers. Without the available information and services, there would have been an estimated 1.5 million additional premarital pregnancies in 1976 alone. Even so, the number of teenage births in the U. S. is among the highest in the developed countries. About 5% of our youth give birth each year—a rate of 52 per 1,000. The rate for Japan is 3 per 1,000.

Most teenagers seek information about birth control methods only *after* the first intercourse. Of the teenage women who become sexually active, about half get pregnant within six months after their initial experience. The more than half that do not become pregnant seek help in avoiding the risks. Yet misinformation or inconsistent and improper use of contraceptive methods still leaves unwed women with 86% of their pregnancies unintended. However, with increased and regular use of birth control protection, the incidence of unintended pregnancy does sharply drop off. Only 17% of unwed teenage women experience an additional unintended pregnancy.

Teenage births are costly to mother, child, and society. The teenage mother who elects to keep the delivered baby without a father in the home often must delay her educational and career plans, perhaps forever. Without adequate education and career development, such women can look forward only to menial jobs or even no employment at

all. In this disadvantaged position, a girl must turn to her parents or society for financial assistance.

Only 4 out of 10 teenagers actually receive any kind of sex education. Still fewer learn about contraception through formal instruction. The high incidence of unintended teenage pregnancy clearly documents the lack of accurate information about the reproductive and sexual systems.

Can anything be done about this national disgrace? The Alan Guttmacher Institute proposes a number of ways in which to alleviate the situation: realistically designed sex education programs, adequate and available family planning services, readily accessible abortion services, quality prenatal and postnatal medical care, educational programs for mothers, social and employment services for teenage parents, and research to develop safer and more effective contraceptives suitable to the needs of adolescents.

Teenage Pregnancy: The Problem That Hasn't Gone Away is a highly significant document which deserves wide readership by everyone concerned about the teenage pregnancy epidemic, and especially by those who are providing services to sexually active teenagers. This well-documented report which does so much to separate fact from fiction must have national attention so that the United States can respond to the needs of its youth in positive and humane ways. **A, P, PR**

The Mendola Report. Mary Mendola. New York: Crown Publishers, 1980 (269 pp.; \$12.95).

Reviewed by James P. Vincent, BA, SIECUS staff.

In the introduction to this book, the author, a lesbian, states her purpose: "It is time—finally—for lesbian and homosexual couples *themselves* to define the emotional and sexual dimensions of their lives." Her book, then, is a report and summary of the results of a questionnaire and of intensive interviews with a number of same-sex couples, presented from such a strongly personal viewpoint that the title, *The Mendola Report*, is accurate and appropriate.

From the very beginning, when the various couples who appear throughout the book are introduced, one becomes aware that these interviews are interactions in which Mendola herself actively

participates. This is not to say that the couples serve a role secondary to Mendola's in the way they are presented. On the contrary, they are made more real and more significant through these interactions with her. They speak articulately, humorously, sometimes repetitiously, but always earnestly, demonstrating persuasively the importance and legitimacy of their relationships.

Although strongly opinionated, Mendola clearly cares very deeply about the people who are affected by the issues dealt with, and she openly shares experiences from her own life in a way which sheds light on these same issues. A particularly good example of this is a candid conversation between herself, her lover, and a lesbian couple being interviewed, on the subject of sexual fidelity. Mendola admits her own ambivalence about sexual exclusivity, and the conflict resulting from her lover's more strictly monogamous inclinations. The fact that the discussion here is less concerned with "who is right" than with "how shall we deal with this," speaks well for the tone of the entire book.

Among the subjects covered are coupling/marrying, sex and commitment, problems in relationships, parenthood, similarities and differences between gay and non-gay relationships, therapy for problems in gay relationships, gay youth, divorce, and widowhood—all this in addition to the actual questionnaire and its results.

Mendola sent her "Speak Out" attitudinal-survey questionnaire to all parts of the country. As she says, "By continuously studying New York City and San Francisco homosexuals and lesbians, the gays in Louisville and in rural areas of California and New York State were never represented. What had emerged from New York/San Francisco studies was only a partial (and one-dimensional) view of the lifestyles of homosexuals and lesbians." The unusually high response of 27% of the total of 1,500 questionnaires sent out came from a wide range of persons from every region of the United States.

Mendola's constant presence as a personality in this book does leave some of her inferences and interpretations open to question. I found at least one totally inaccurate interpretation of her own data in the area of role identification problems and jealousy, as well as some forced analogies between her study and Pietropinto and Simenauer's *Husbands and Wives: A Nationwide Survey of Marriage* (New York: Times Books,

1979). Also, in contrast to the generally lively tone of most of the narrative portions, her occasional tendency to sentimentousness makes for some very slow going.

In summary, Mendola presents some welcome information about lesbian and homosexual couples which, though in no way purporting to represent the gay community at large, sheds some light on those relationships that exist, and indeed flourish, largely without the social supports of their heterosexual counterparts. Though a more reserved and scholarly survey of same-sex couples would certainly be welcome, Mendola's clearly involved point of view adds a dimension of humanity which would likely be absent from a more scientific study. **A, PR**

Growing Up Free: Raising Your Child in the '80s. Letty Cottin Pogrebin. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1980 (641 pp.; \$15.95).

Reviewed by Lorna Brown, MA, Vice-Chairperson, SIECUS Board of Directors.

I began reading this book with the confidence that my husband and I had the model non-sexist household, that our daughters were growing up without the shackles of society's role expectations, and that the only reason I was reading such a tome at all was to review it—for it certainly wouldn't teach me a thing. It took just two pages to tell me how wrong I was, and that the opportunities for improvement in my own backyard were multitudinous. Much of our "liberation" was in my mind and not in my words and actions.

Growing Up Free is a massive research effort covering child-rearing from conception ("We'd like to have a boy first and then a girl.") to majority ("We've always encouraged her to take charge, but it's nice that she's finally found a man and settled down."). Some of the book's emphases are on: parity parenting with "more Dad in the home and more Mom in the world," developing gender-neutral attitudes, allowing both girls and boys to grow up without society's gender expectations, helping girls to appreciate their sexuality, and becoming aware of the many ways in which we are consciously and subconsciously passing on to both sons and daughters the same sexist ideas that were passed on to us. Useful ideas abound: if all household work is gender neutral and tasks

are assigned equally to all family members, children will quickly learn that housework is work like any other job and not only part of what Mommy does.

I found the chapters dealing with sexuality especially wise and relevant with their emphasis on non-sexist sex education. Basic concepts—such as society's difficulty in accepting the sexuality (as opposed to the reproductivity) of girls because of the deeply ingrained belief that "girls are meant to be mothers"—are drawn together to form a framework to guide the reader toward an understanding of what has to be done. The author suggests that parents who raise their daughters to view their own sexuality as a life-long source of pleasure and to recognize their parents as being lovers in addition to being Mom and Dad, will be giving them "a ticket to sexual sanity."

Outstanding in its usefulness and future impact, Pogrebin's advice on a parent's responsibility for a son's or daughter's healthy sexual development is perhaps the best that I have read:

Teach a daughter dignity, self-respect and unabashed authority over her own well-informed authentic sexual self. Teach a son that he doesn't always have to know what to do or take charge or perform; that scoring is stealing unless a girl is as willing, as risk-free and as sexually satisfied as he is; that his sexuality is neither so wild that it cannot be controlled, nor so vulnerable that it can be ruined by rejection.

Sexism in all its ugly manifestations—toys, books, television, employment, advertising, schools, sports, and play—is examined and revealed, so that there is no doubt for the reader that a parent must make an active effort to effect change. Doing nothing is by default allowing sexism to flourish in our society.

As I became totally engrossed in *Growing Up Free*, I wondered if it was too late for our daughters (aged eight and five). Had I unconsciously done irreversible damage? Was my influence as a parent less important than that of their peers, television, school, etc.? Yes, I had resolved to present this book to friends expecting a child, whether the first or fourth, but how could I effect change in my own family?

One of the points that particularly hit home for me was the concept of *mother as doer*. Children need to see their

mothers doing all kinds of jobs. Pogrebin expands this concept even further by emphasizing that we cannot expect girls to aspire to be or do something they have never seen or read about a woman being or doing. I resolved that this is where I would begin. Even if the bread is baked by Daddy and the lawn is mowed by Mommy at our home, society's influence is so strong that the girls still think of Daddy as the doer and of me as part of their creature comfort—this in spite of the fact that each morning we both commute to our offices in the city!

My first opportunity to effect change came when the Brownie troop was coming to camp out in our woods. A fire pit had to be dug. I must admit that, previous to reading *Growing Up Free*, I would have left that job to Jack, who is far more efficient than I with a spade. But with a sense of mission, I picked up the tools and, girls in tow, marched into the woods. Through roots and rocks I dug until, an hour later, I had produced a model fire pit. At first, the girls took turns digging and hauling rocks. But when I turned around to collect the admiration for the finished product, they were nowhere to be seen. I found them inside at the desk "playing work," as they called it. Clare handed me the product of her labor, a memo reading as follows: "Dear Ann, I just wanted you to know that the Zerocks [sic] is working again."

P. S. I did ask Jack to dig the latrine, but I'll remain ever grateful to Letty Pogrebin, as should be all the moms and dads in this highly sexist U. S. of A. **A, P, PR**

Sexual Choices. Gilbert D. Nass, Roger W. Libby, and Mary Pat Fisher. Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth, Inc., 1981 (631 pp. plus appendices; \$18.95).

Reviewed by Jean Levitan, MA, PhD candidate in Human Sexuality Program at New York University; faculty member, Health Sciences Department, William Paterson College of New Jersey.

In recent years we have seen a proliferation of college textbooks on human sexuality. For comprehensiveness, none that I have seen so far matches *Sexual Choices*. It is extremely well documented and up-to-date. The authors offer their information "as a basis for making sexual choices that are informed, responsible, and satisfying," and they achieve their purpose by

emphasizing sexuality as a positive and joyful component of life.

The organization of *Sexual Choices* is one of its best features. The work is categorized into five areas: (1) an exploration of personal and interpersonal dynamics of sexuality; (2) sexual learning and development throughout the lifespan; (3) sexual politics; (4) sexual health issues; and (5) sex in the future. While students may not always be directed to read textbook chapters in the order presented, the logical sequence here encourages one to re-evaluate the way sexual topics have previously been categorized. For example, sexual dysfunction is grouped with other problems needing special attention—such as physical disability—in a chapter entitled "Enhancing Sexual Health." Homosexuality and bisexuality are treated sensitively in a chapter immediately following one on sexual behaviors, orgasm, and intimacy, rather than as usual being relegated to the chapter on sexual variations.

Sexual Choices has other unique features which make it an attractive textbook. Entire chapters are devoted to intimacy and older people, women's liberation and sexual choices, and sexual assault. The appendix "Yellow Pages of Informed Sexual Choices" is an up-to-date directory of sex-related organizations, services, and other sources of sexual information. Other important topics are approached in a novel and valuable way: the options presented by an unwanted pregnancy; significant emphasis on male contraception; detailed instructions on breast and testicular self-examination; the development and dissolution of relationships; and a broad discussion on homosexual and bisexual lifestyles, lovemaking techniques, coming out, and parenthood.

A persistent theme throughout is the need to examine carefully the words we use to discuss sexuality, and the values implicit in such words. Most chapters include boxes titled "Language of Sex," where one or more words are examined. While much of the recommended terminology is an improvement, some substitutes seem more cumbersome than useful. Is "sexmaking" preferable to "lovemaking"? Does "bodyblending" more accurately categorize "sexual behaviors"? Is it really helpful to distinguish marriage, cohabitation, and singlehood as "adult sexual careers"? However, it is important to probe the assumption behind a vague term like "premarital sex," possibly to replace it

with something like "singles sex." The authors also urge that the sexes not be labeled "opposite" as if gender characteristics were mutually exclusive. Similar concern for value-laden terminology is well illustrated throughout.

Problems with this textbook are few. Although the level of scholarship and documentation is one of its strengths, it may also limit its appropriateness to a more sophisticated college population. Oddly, for all its thoroughness and "sex-positive" approach, only drawings (admittedly quite excellent) are used to represent adult nudity. Actual photographs of male and female genitalia would have enhanced the discussions of the reproductive system and of sexually transmitted diseases. And those interested in transsexualism, transvestism, "swinging," paraphilias, and other variations in behavior are likely to feel shortchanged.

Despite these limitations, *Sexual Choices* is an excellent text for courses in human sexuality. In today's political climate, more students need to be exposed to material that emphasizes the inevitability of having to make appropriate personal choices. **A, PR**

The Red Lamp of Incest: What the Taboo Can Tell Us About Who We Are and How We Got That Way. Robin Fox. New York: E. P. Dutton, 1980 (271 pp.; \$12.95).

Reviewed by Nelson H. H. Graburn, PhD, Professor of Anthropology, University of California, Berkeley.

Robin Fox, a biosocial anthropologist with British and American training, is already well known for his works on kinship (*Kinship and Marriage*, 1967) and the biosocial aspects of human nature and evolution (*The Imperial Animal* [with Lionel Tiger], 1971; *Biosocial Anthropology* [ed.], 1975). In this ambitious volume he presents his latest synthetic formulation in a style intended more for lay people than for specialists.

The book claims to be "an attempt to rewrite Freud's *Totem and Taboo*" but one might also include Darwin's *The Descent of Man and Selection in Relation to Sex*, Westermarck's *History of Human Marriage*, and Levi-Strauss's *Elementary Structures of Kinship*. In the complex argument that he weaves, tying together such topics as primate mating patterns, the origins of speech, the evolution of the brain, and the development of family structures, the author

relies heavily upon the latest researches on primate behavior, endocrinology and the brain, archaeology and paleo-anthropology, sociobiology, behavior in kibbutzim, and other case studies in the social anthropology of kinship, but includes relatively little on recent literature about incest in the modern world. In fact, the reader should realize at the outset that less than 10% of the book concerns what he calls "the contemporary scene." At times one gets the impression that the subject of incest is not the core of the book, but serves rather as the guiding light to tie together these diverse topics.

Fox starts with the question of universal human attitudes toward incest, reminding us that incest taboos (rules against sex with close family members) are not the same as rules of exogamy (against marrying close relatives). However, both sets of rules are found in all human societies and are closely connected. What he finds is that human beings do not generally show a great desire to have incestuous sex, but that they do exhibit an unease not only about incest but about sexual matters in general. Taking a sociobiological point of view, he avers that all human culture is nothing but the trappings for successful biological reproduction.

In Chapter II he examines the case of sibling incest in some detail, using ethnographic cases and particularly good data on Chinese "brother-sister" *sim pua* marriages and on *kibbutzim* where children of both sexes are allowed untrammelled sensuous relationships, yet rarely if ever continue into adult sexual and marital relationships. He resolves the opposed theories of Westermarck—who posited that children brought up together feel no sexual attraction—and Freud—who postulated a strong sexual desire with the consequent need for incest taboos. He refines a previously published hypothesis to state that: in societies where children from birth until age six are allowed intense physical interaction, they develop a positive aversion to adult sex, and sanctions are relatively lax; whereas in societies with physical separation of children in the same household (as in Freud's Vienna), strong sexual desires develop, along with fierce incest taboos.

Chapter III on the "Primal Horde" moves us closer to the heart of his evolutionary argument and to the problems of parent-child incest. He revives Freud's (Atkinson's, Darwin's) story of the "original patricide" by jealous younger sons,

and concludes that such must have occurred, at least in the metaphorical sense. His major proposition is that throughout biosocial primate evolution, older males try to control the younger males and the sexuality of younger females, to their own power and advantage. He examines the latest data on primate behavior and draws from the varied patterns a "baseline": the senior males control the females and defend the group, while the younger (weaker) males are pushed to the periphery and have to work their way to the center of power and seniority. He finds two primate patterns, one in which there are enduring groups of blood relatives (kinship) and one in which there are enduring mating relationships (marriage), but never both together. Human evolution combined the two in the unique combination that is our condition.

The chapter "Sex in the Head" follows primate-to-human evolution by showing the change in reproductive strategy from "animal" strength and force to the superior advantages of "brain power." As hunting strategies became more sophisticated with the use of tools and the development of language, "equilibration"—the ability to postpone emotions and to reason out decisions—became decisively advantageous, leading to quick evolution of the brain and of human social and cultural structures. It was during this period, less than two million years ago, that man came to occupy the largely carnivorous niche in East Africa, organized extensive hunting parties, and combined "kinship" with "marriage" in evolving the systems of exogamy and the incest taboo upon which all human families are founded. The primate "central, dominant" males became "initiated" males; "peripheral" males became the "uninitiated"; and the male-female division of labor became dichotomized. The new cultural rules are the social expressions of the taming of emotions, but, Fox asserts, the evolution of the brain has "wired" us to invent cultural rules which are therefore "natural": we learn easily those things which have survival value.

The short concluding chapter, which, like others, relies heavily on the inspired fictional works of William Golding, presents Fox's views on "the contemporary scene" and some strong conclusions.

The biological results of our long evolution are built into the brain such that human societies still consist of their building blocks—namely, married men, married women with children, and

unmarried young people, mainly boys, the "natural" result of which is a high sexual division of labor, polygamy, and somewhat loose extended families. He asserts that our concerns with the incest taboo are a recent product of our adherence to the idea of the nuclear family—an arrangement that, along with monogamy, he asserts is unnatural, both being products of the church and the state, long enemies of kinship systems. Polygamy is "natural," with polyandry for the poorest males and polygyny for the most successful. Divorce is the expected outcome of the lengthening of the life span compared with "traditional" societies, where early death allowed most marriages to last only 15 or 20 years at most. Female liberation is an unnatural "luxury of affluent industrial societies" based on the "tyranny of the nuclear family and monogamy." "Two-income families" are not a new necessity but a replacement for women's traditional roles and the automatically expected labor of children in traditional societies. He agrees that female militants should reject the role of (monogamous) wife because that is unnatural but suggests that they are confused when they reject the role of mother and try to be like men.

Contraception is biologically and socially dangerous and, in the middle classes of the industrial world where it is most common, has contributed to the loss of "old-male power" leading to an "unnatural world" where the young have become expensive pets and many women are pseudopregnant and sexually less attractive and less controllable. The contrary, teenage pregnancy, he asserts, is not so bad, as it is natural that middle and older teenagers should wish to have sex and babies, as they have throughout human history and as they continue to do throughout most of the world. Finally, in the section "Incest Today" he repeats his idea that, even without laws against it, incest would not become a universal problem. Indeed, if other sanctions which ensure monogamy, the nuclear family, and the physical separation of young children were removed, incest would hardly ever occur.

We may conclude by praising the ambitious and synthetic nature of this "mini-magnum opus." Fox has used the best biological, neurological, primatological, and anthropological data to try to give us a picture of the built-in tendencies and limitations of our biosocial selves. He warns us that we cannot for

long upset this evolved set of mechanisms, whatever else changes in the world. Because of the condensation of his enormous argument and his attempt to put it in lay phraseology, the book at times tends to make large leaps in logic so that one might question some of his ingenious connections. However, the reader must contend with the consequences of the possibility that Fox is essentially right. **A**

Childhood Sexual Learning: The Unwritten Curriculum. Elizabeth J. Roberts, ed. Cambridge, Mass.: Ballinger Publishing, 1980 (287 pp.; \$18.50).

Reviewed by Ronald Moglia, EdD, Associate Professor, Human Sexuality Program, New York University.

This book has taken on the awesome task of attempting to describe all the social stimuli that affect the child's sexual learning. The use of the word *curriculum* in the title could be misleading since it may give the impression that this is an examination of sexual messages in academic topics not involved with sex education. Actually the focus of the book is even broader; it discusses all the sexual messages in our culture.

The book is divided into 10 chapters, and although each chapter is written by an author with eminent credentials in that specific field, it is obvious that none of them is well informed in the comprehensive area of human sexuality. The chapters range in quality from banal speculation to insightful commentary about the social influences on the sexual development of the child. The editor clearly states that the authors are expressing their own views and that in some areas no research existed on which to base their essays. True, there may not be formal published research available in some of the areas but there certainly is much current work being done that has not been reported. In other chapters I found the authors' viewpoints biased through their concentration on only one theoretical aspect of research.

Specific grounds for these two criticisms are found in Chapter 2, "Toward an Understanding of Sexual Learning and Communication: An Examination of Social Learning Theory and Non-School Learning Environments" by Janet Kahn and David Kline, in which the authors' stated purpose is to attempt to "remove some of the mystery" from the sexual learning process—a mystery that can

"hinder us . . . from assuming responsibility for our own sexual conduct and values." What is actually presented in the chapter is a good explanation of a specific social learning theory, one theoretical model of how children acquire sexual knowledge. With no reference made to other theoretical concepts here or anywhere else in the book, the impression may be given that this is the only existing process of non-formal sexual learning. In addition, this overtly biased chapter applies the social learning process to the acquisition of sexual knowledge only in general rather than specific ways.

There are several chapters that are excellent and they should be given special mention. Chapter 3, "Work, the Family and Children's Sexual Learning" by Cathy Stein Greenblat, is a fine analysis of research on parents' work world and its effect on family, parents' sexual teaching, and children's sexual learning. It is a stimulating integration of research with practical applications.

Chapter 4, "Television as a Sphere of Influence on the Child's Learning About Sexuality" by Hilde Himmelweit and Norma Bell, is a thought-provoking look at television as a major contributor to children's sexual learning. The review of research and the recommendations for the television industry should be carefully studied by all those interested in fostering healthy sexual development in children.

"Sexual Learning in the Elementary School" by Michael Carrera (Chapter 5) gives the reader a brief synopsis of traditional sex education programs but, more importantly, it discusses types of sexual learning which occur in the school outside of the formal classroom curriculum. The author enlightens the reader about the sexual "ecology of the school setting," emphasizing, for example, that "schools that treat all children with respect and equal attention, rather than separating them by sex for various activities, make a positive contribution toward healthy sexual learning that these young people will carry with them into adulthood."

Finally, Chapter 8, "Religion and the Sexual Learning of Children" by Sheila Collins, effectively examines the role of the religious traditions of Judaism, Roman Catholicism, and Protestantism in shaping the sexual learning of American children. This most informative essay compares the moral and ethical authority of each religion and the effect on the sexual learning of the child, and

explains each religion's views on erotic activity and gender roles.

The concept that most of our children's sexual learning occurs outside of the formal classroom is an important one to recognize. Although the scholarly examination of that phenomenon is effectively accomplished only in the specific chapters mentioned, the book on the whole could be helpful to non-professionals in the study of human sexuality. **A, PR**

Growing Up With Sex: A Guide for the Early Teens. Revised ed. Richard Hettlinger. New York: Continuum Publishing, 1980 (132 pp.; \$4.95).

Sex, Sexuality and You: A Handbook for Growing Christians. Nancy Hennessy Cooney, with Anne Bingham. Dubuque, Iowa: Wm. C. Brown Co., 1980 (100 pp.; \$3.50).

Reviewed by Jane Quinn, ACSW, Project Director, Center for Population Options, Washington, D.C.; member SIECUS Board of Directors.

The task of reviewing these books together is an enlightening one because, while they are quite different from the secular sex education texts with which I am most familiar, they are also quite different from one another.

Let's look at their similarities first. The books share a common major objective: to provide accurate sexual information in the context of a Christian value system. Both are written for a junior-high level audience, and offer guidance based on the authors' direct experience in working with young people. Cooney and Hettlinger share a conviction that adolescents today want guidance on sexual development and expression; Hettlinger notes that "young people are given little or no help in establishing responsible, honest, and meaningful sexual standards for themselves." Both writers perceive a purely biological approach to sexuality education as inadequate, and each attempts to present a systematic body of Christian teaching about a full range of sexual behaviors and issues.

The subtitle of Cooney's book may be a bit misleading; the book, in fact, offers the official Catholic teaching on sexual matters as its basic moral framework (and it carries a Catholic *Nihil Obstat* and *Imprimatur*, indicating that the book is free from doctrinal error). Hettlinger's

book, on the other hand, is more generically "Christian," and follows mainline Protestant teachings on sexuality.

Despite this basic general difference, both books emphasize several key points: that sexual decision-making means taking responsibility for your choices; that acquiring knowledge and understanding about one's sexuality is a complex process; that adults can be useful sources of sexual information and advice; that sexuality is a good gift from God; that young people need to develop personal standards that they then apply to their behavior; and that failure to live up to one's personal standards does not mean condemnation or connote sinfulness, but indicates a need to work more diligently toward this goal.

Because of their different theological orientations, these books provide contrasting teaching about several specific behavioral topics. For example, on masturbation, Hettlinger devotes several pages to an analysis of medical, psychological, sexual, and spiritual dimensions of this topic, and concludes that "if we accepted masturbation (as many societies do) as a natural phenomenon of puberty, no more sinful than menstruation, most of the anxiety and fear it generates would never arise." Cooney, by contrast, gives the subject only three paragraphs, briefly covering a definition, a correction of old myths, and a statement of why this practice is not acceptable according to Catholic doctrine. In any case, today masturbation is considered a natural phenomenon of all ages, from infancy to old age.

In regard to premarital sex, both books present the teaching that sexual intercourse is intended for marriage, and should be reserved for that relationship. Hettlinger offers mutual petting to orgasm as "the alternative" to premarital intercourse for many young people. Cooney discusses "ways to survive skin hunger" and emphasizes the importance of touch in interpersonal relationships, but does not offer specific behavioral alternatives to premarital intercourse. Both authors present a primarily negative view of reasons why young people engage in premarital sex, e.g., Cooney's statement that, for some people, "sexual intercourse is something to do to kill time. (Bored on a date? Let's have sex)." Even young people who want to abstain from intercourse during their adolescent years might find these arguments unconvincing, and possibly insulting.

From a factual point of view, the discussions on birth control in both books are problematic. Cooney presents so little information on the various methods as to make the entire section inadequate; Hettlinger's more detailed account contains some factual errors and omissions (for example, stating that the condom and foam are the most popular birth control methods among teenagers; referring to natural family planning as rhythm; not including the cervical mucous method; and neglecting to mention the Copper 7 in his discussion of IUD use among adolescents). Although Cooney presents the official Catholic teaching on contraceptive use, she acknowledges that many Catholic couples disagree with this teaching and choose not to follow it.

Clear differences emerge on the issue of abortion, from its definition through discussion of its moral acceptability. Cooney defines it as a woman's "ending her pregnancy by killing the developing child inside her," while Hettlinger calls it "to terminate pregnancy." After stating official Catholic doctrine on the issue, Cooney presents both the "prolife" and "prochoice" positions, and calls for those who oppose abortion to make a commitment also to the children born to women who might have chosen abortion had it been available. Hettlinger elects to include abortion in his chapter on teenage marriage, and provides a balanced discussion of issues a couple would need to consider if an unwanted pregnancy occurred.

More similarities than differences appear on the topic of homosexuality. Both authors take an informational approach, dispel myths, and call for understanding and nondiscrimination toward homosexual individuals. Both counsel young people not to assume from early homosexual experiences that they are therefore gay, and they encourage discussion with adults about personal worries on the topic. And both writers acknowledge that some of our society's religious institutions are currently struggling to reach a fuller understanding and a more helpful teaching regarding homosexual behavior and orientation.

The most profound difference between these two books turns out not to be in the area of doctrine at all. It occurs, rather, on the issue of sex roles, sexual equality, and the differences between the sexes. Cooney's stance throughout her work is to portray sex role stereotypes as limitations for both sexes. She characterizes Jesus as "a Person ahead of

His time," one who was able to rise above the stereotypes of his own era and to treat others as unique individuals. Hettlinger, by contrast, not only fails to discuss the issue of sex role stereotypes directly, but unfortunately actually perpetuates a number of these stereotypes throughout the text of his book by constantly pointing out how differently males and females experience their sexuality. (For example, without reference to research, he states: "Ultimately, women are more confident and secure in their sexuality than men.") Much of his discussion of boy-girl relationships during adolescence seems outdated and based on his personal opinions rather than on the wealth of research information that has accrued since the first edition of the book in 1970. A similar problem is reflected in several direct quotes from young people in which old-fashioned language is used. How many teenagers today use phrases like "it shows he doesn't fancy you"?

Both works are geared appropriately to a junior high school reading level. Hettlinger's book contains only two drawings while Cooney's is nicely illustrated through a variety of drawings and unusual silhouette photographs.

While both volumes contain some good information and sound guidance on how to integrate an understanding of sexuality into one's growing identity and existing value system, I am still searching for educational materials that, in their efforts to present sexual abstinence during adolescence in a positive light, do not overdramatize the possible negative consequences of teenage sexual intercourse. Perhaps such materials have not yet been written. **ET**

Sexual Solutions: An Informative Guide. Michael Castleman. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1980 (286 pp.; \$12.95).

Reviewed by Sam Julty, sex educator and lecturer specializing in men's studies; author of *Men's Bodies, Men's Selves* (1979) and articles on men's health.

The marked advances in both modern sexology and the women's movement occurred in the same era and served each other well: what many women already knew about their own sexuality was now validated by the researchers; what support of the sexual self women once gave each other in private notes and whispered chats now became a public voice of sisterhood. Freed from the

prior restraints which tied their sexuality to psychopathology and sexist Freudian dicta, inspired by the new therapies which encouraged sexual expression instead of suppressing it, and supported by an organized political movement, women saw the emergence of a large body of popular literature devoted to female sexuality.

Alas, not so for men. While the findings in the laboratories, the papers in the professional journals, and the practices in the consulting rooms are equally concerned with male sexuality—what it is and what it is not—the library of popular literature focusing on the positive aspects of men's sexual lives remains relatively small. Hence those men—and women—who want to break through the myths and the alleged mysteries of male sexuality have but limited source material.

Michael Castleman's *Sexual Solutions* does more than add another book to the slim inventory of works on men's sexuality. It gives its readers an effective tool to probe, unearth, study, and reshape their perceptions of men as sexual beings. My enthusiasm for this book is high for many reasons. On top of the list is its readability. Castleman's promise, given in the introduction, that "the tone is down-to-earth, not clinical," is made good throughout the text. And while he is careful not to deprecate the more detailed books on human sexuality, he does observe that the clinical approach "has advantages as far as scientific credibility and sobriety are concerned, but the drawback is that most people are not inclined to read jargon-filled books."

In this, his first book, Castleman wears many hats and wears them well. As a writer, his ticket to the reader's mind is the delivery of clear, short statements which flow without apology or strain. As a teacher, he does not hammer on the facts and the data, but instead unfolds the options for the reader to examine and evaluate. As a counselor, he is sensitive and supportive as he discusses early ejaculation, non-ejaculation, and erectile problems. (I was particularly pleased that his thinking joins mine in considering as destructive and inaccurate the term "impotence" when used to describe erectile dysfunction.) As a socially aware person, he does not reduce men's sexuality to a narcissistic quest for pleasure and "self-fulfillment." Rather, he asks his reader to understand that sexual problems and sexual happiness fuse in a social tree with personal roots. His chapters, "If the Woman You Love Gets

Raped," "Hardcore/Softcore: The Boom in Sex Media," "Sharing Birth Control Enhances Lovemaking," and "A Brief Guide to Sexual Infections," should become required reading for every male old enough to say the word "relationship."

There is only one thing about this book that bothers me—its title. *Sexual Solutions: An Informative Guide* really says nothing of what the book is really about. Is it a compendium of formulas for liquid aphrodisiacs? Is it a sequel to a book called "Sexual College Exams"? What is there about the title of *Sexual Solutions*, a much-needed book on men's sexuality, that will pique the interest of the men and women who search the bookshops for the information contained within its covers? Nothing much. It is regrettable that publishers still shy away from a bold identification of books which explore men's sexuality with quiet honesty, as this one does.

But while the cover doesn't say much, the pages do. This book will benefit not only men, but also women, and professionals who deal or work with men. **A, PR**

Sex in the World's Religions. Geoffrey Parrinder. New York: Oxford University Press, 1980 (263 pp.; \$7.95).

Reviewed by William H. Genné, MA, ACS, Montclair Counseling Center, Montclair, N.J.

Geoffrey Parrinder, long-time Professor of the Comparative Study of Religions at London University, draws on 20 years of teaching in Africa and on extensive travels throughout Africa, Asia, and the Mideast, to supplement his professional studies of the major living religions of the world in order to give us, in a readable style and format, a comprehensive study of the sexual attitudes of those religions.

With Hinduism, he examines its vast complex of attitudes toward sex, ranging from full indulgence to ascetic denial, considering Buddhism and other Indian traditions in subsequent chapters. He elaborates on China's Yin and Yang, Taoistic and Confucian morality, and considers some of the Buddhist influences that came into the country. Japan's Shinto traditions, phallicism, and the meaning of In and Yo are discussed, along with the role of the geishas in that society.

African religions and sexual customs are then considered including a discus-

sion of the European influences bearing on them. The chapter on "Islamic Customs," with an extensive section on the marriages and teachings of the Prophet, provides helpful insights—especially in light of the importance that part of the world holds in today's news. The changing attitudes toward the roles of women are described.

The Hebrew religion, its Creation stories, its emphasis on circumcision, and its attitudes toward women and marriage are all reviewed with sensitivity. The chapter on "Christian Diversity" surveys various strands of thought that contribute to some of today's contemporary dilemmas in that faith. A concluding chapter describes the influences of medicine, psychology, women's rights, and the continuing interactions of all religions on the world scene, as factors in the shaping of the future into which we are moving.

Liberal citations from his sources and stories from his own experiences, along with ample bibliographic suggestions for further study plus an excellent index, make Parrinder's book a helpful guide to a comprehensive and complicated subject. **A, PR**

Counseling With Gay Men and Women: A Guide for Facilitating Positive Life-Styles. Natalie Jane Woodman and Harry R. Lenna. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1980 (144 pp.; \$12.95).

Reviewed by Charles Silverstein, PhD, psychologist in private practice, New York City; author of Man to Man: Gay Couples in America (Morrow and Company, 1981); founding editor of The Journal of Homosexuality; former director of the Institute for Human Identity, a counseling center for gay people in New York City.

This book is the most recent addition to a scanty literature addressed to the issue of counseling gay men and women. Without doubt more books on this topic are needed to assist professionals in providing competent services to the millions of men and women who identify themselves as gay. In its 122 pages (plus references and bibliography), it discusses clinical attitudes toward homosexuality, counseling procedures, problems of sexual identity, promoting a positive self-image, problems of youth, coming-out, couples relationships, and building gay support groups. If this sounds like too large a bite of material

for 122 pages, let me assure you it is.

In the first place, the authors appear to have little or no respect for scholarship or accuracy. For instance, they repeatedly claim that the American Psychiatric Association removed homosexuality *per se* as a mental disorder in 1968. The correct date is, of course, 1973, and any author who appreciates the history of research on sexuality, particularly homosexuality, would not have made that mistake. (Nor do they mention that homosexuality remained in DSM II, and continues today in DSM III when it is perceived by the person as ego-alien.) The authors mention the work of Kinsey and his colleagues at the Institute for Sex Research, but refer to it as the Institute for Human Sexuality. They also appear to believe that Havelock Ellis viewed homosexuality as non-pathological, and curiously, they give the date of Ellis's book (on page 7) as 1897. This is the publication date of his *Studies in the Psychology of Sex: Sexual Inversion*, but they list a different book (*On Life and Sex*) in the reference section with a publication year of 1957! They also refer to the recent Bell and Weinberg book (*Homosexualities: A Study of Diversity Among Men and Women*, 1978) as a sociological study. Could two authors have actually read this material if they cited it so poorly? Whether or not they did, they seem not to care about checking their facts. One immediately wonders whether their own ideas are any better formulated.

Unfortunately the book remains on a superficial level, filled with clichés disguised in the jargon of humanism: People need to grow toward self-actualization, and then share emotions, feelings, whatever. Two examples will suffice. On page 51, the authors state: "If any relationship is to flourish, each individual must have room to grow in self-actualizing ways." They then cite a partial dialogue between members of a group (p. 51):

Thomas: Shit, Alan, is that all you're interested in? Getting your rocks off?

Alan: Well, what's wrong with that?

Thomas: Everything, man! I mean, if that's all sex means to you, why don't you stay home and masturbate?

Facilitator: Hey, Thomas! You're angry. Why?

Thomas: All Alan does is use people!

I thought this interesting dialogue would be followed by an inquiry as to

whether Alan was avoiding feelings about intimacy through his frequent and impersonal sex (one assumes), or to wondering why Thomas gives a damn about Alan's sex life, which might lead to his feelings of envy of Alan's sexual skills. But the next paragraph ignores all these possibilities and moves on to statements such as: "The invidious influences of social isolation, stigmatization, unconscious internalization of negative self-images, and past negative experiences have conspired to place many gays in a defensive and uncertain position" (p.51).

These clichés just won't do for trained counselors and therapists who want to enlarge their professional skills. More importantly, however, I don't think that either Alan or Thomas would learn anything from this obscure approach. Both would probably agree with the authors' statement, but it does not help them confront the probable sexual competition between them. One gets, from reading this short dialogue, the nagging feeling that the counseling/therapeutic issue is that Thomas is envious of Alan who is enjoying numerous sexual encounters while he is staying at home, fallow. And that is what counseling/therapy is really about.

The fact is that *Counseling with Gay Men and Women* appears to have just one point and one purpose: The authors are angry at our society which has discriminated against homosexual behavior, and they want to enlist all counselors as agents of social change. No matter what the chapter heading is, they get to the point by demanding that all counselors read the literature on homosexuality (which the authors should have done themselves with more care and discrimination), and then fight to make our society believe that a gay lifestyle is a "positive self-identity." Perhaps social values should change; perhaps, too, the helping professions should take a stand, as some of our professional associations have; *but that is not the subject matter of this book.*

There is much wrong with a book on counseling done from the point of view of an activist. By definition, the author, as activist, upstages the very people he/she intends to serve. All perceptions are filtered through angry emotions instead of through the intra-personal conflicts of the counselees. People do not enter a counseling or therapeutic relationship because our society is biased. If they perceive that society is at fault, they join a gay liberation organiza-

tion and, if need be, build the barricades. But those gay men and women who seek counseling arrive at the professionals' doors because of conflicting forces within themselves over which they have lost control. They enter not because they feel that society is awful, but because they believe that they are no better. And they may be right. Blaming our amorphous culture only prolongs the agony, and externalizes (but only for a while) the various layers of guilt so commonly found in gay people.

There is too much talk about "homophobia" which, in this book as in many others, is used as an accusatory attack upon anyone who disagrees with the authors' point of view. It is a form of tit-for-tat—call me "queer" and I'll call you "homophobic." If a person out there hates me or is frightened of me, let me understand why; if I hate myself or am frightened of myself, let me understand why. Nothing gets understood by labeling as "homophobic" either outsiders or myself.

There is still need for a good book about counseling gay men and women. This one is not recommended except as an object lesson in futile, non-illuminating polemics.

Entitled to Love: The Sexual and Emotional Needs of the Handicapped.

Wendy Greengross. Rugby, England: The National Marriage Guidance Council, 1976 (121 pp.; £2.50). This book is available through Planned Parenthood of Southeastern Pennsylvania Resource Center, 1220 Sansom Street, Philadelphia, PA 19107.

Reviewed by Winifred Kempton, MSW, ACSW, Consultant, Planned Parenthood of Southeastern Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pa.

Wendy Greengross, a general practitioner in London, is a marriage guidance counselor, chairman of the Committee on the Sexual Problems of the Disabled, one of Britain's top advocates of the social-sexual rights of the disabled, and an occasional journalist and broadcaster. Her combination of knowledge, experience, and empathy with the handicapped makes *Entitled to Love* an excellent book.

Greengross does not suggest that all disabled persons can and must have a rapturous sex life, something that all people even *without* disabilities do not always have or perhaps even want. But

she asks us to look at the realities: the problems and varying needs of handicapped persons concerning their bodies, their roles in society, and their need for help and understanding in expressing intimacy in their relationships. "I am not setting out to make people dissatisfied with what they have got," she writes. "Nor am I attempting to give the disabled more information so that they can more fully appreciate what they are missing. The aim is to point out that the handicapped have a right to love and be loved, and a right to be hurt. This is part of the human condition. At present a large section of the community is 'keeping them out of it.' This is well-meaning, but ultimately grossly unfair."

Each of the 10 short chapters of *Entitled to Love* deals with a specific problem. One section discusses: the handicapped adolescent's romantic fantasies of social-sexual life contrasted with the more realistic possibilities; the physical bases that discourage intimacy; and the frustrating dependence on others.

In another two chapters the author discusses marriages of handicapped persons in three separate categories: where both partners are disabled; where only one has a handicap; and where one partner has become disabled since the marriage, because of accident or illness. She then describes the social barriers to the marriage of disabled people which are erected by outside forces, and suggests alternative methods of achieving sexual fulfillment if intercourse is not possible or desired. Genetic counseling and appropriate birth control methods are also discussed.

The section on parenting of children with disabilities emphasizes the importance of learning to understand the nature of each child's sexuality in relation to the handicap.

Two chapters deal with the particular problems encountered in residential care by which handicapped people are often deprived of privacy and opportunities to enjoy sexual contact and relationships. Unsympathetic staff members with inconsistent, often rigid biases against social-sexual freedom for residents are part of the problem.

As to sex education for mentally handicapped people, Greengross sees this as even more needed by them than by the non-handicapped. However, it is unrealistic, she believes, to confuse sex education for the disabled by discussions of marriage, children, human reproduction, and sexual intimacy, for these top-

ics are irrelevant for the many who are handicapped by severe disability or isolation. For these people sex education should be specially structured to widen the horizons of experience possible for them in contrast to those with every chance of marrying and having children. Masturbation, solitary or mutual, same gender or other gender, and discussions of ways to express sexuality other than through marriage and bearing children should be included in any sex education program for all handicapped. Greengross's chapter on sterilization, marriage, and child bearing deals specifically with the realities of life for this group.

Although the experienced reader may find redundant the author's constant and consistent criticism of society's negative attitudes and practices which restrict sexual freedom for the handicapped, perhaps the plea for sex education for the disabled cannot be made too often. *Entitled to Love* calls attention briefly but firmly to the plight of this group in struggling to secure such freedom. Professionals, parents, and the handicapped themselves should profit from reading this book. Greengross's straightforward manner and practical suggestions combined with sound philosophical ideas should ensure her book a place on the slowly growing shelf of material devoted to the sexual and emotional needs of the handicapped. **A, P, PR**

Our Sexuality. Robert Crooks and Karla Baur. Menlo Park, Calif.: The Benjamin/Cummings Publishing Company, 1980 (559 pp.; \$16.95).

Reviewed by Marie Steinsieck, RN, MA, School Nurse and Health Educator, Plainfield School District, Plainfield, N.H.

At last—a textbook on sexuality that is interesting and extremely readable. It is very apparent that Crooks and Baur, with a combined total of 15 years of teaching, counseling, and research in human sexuality, are well versed in their field. Their long experience as team teachers is made obvious by the skillful manner in which they guide the reader through their well-designed course in sexuality without excessive pedantry. The use of case histories and personal anecdotes makes the text more human and increases the reader's understanding of how diverse human sexual behaviors and attitudes really are.

In the introductory chapter of Part I, the authors explain their basic goal which is successfully reflected throughout the text: to be completely unbiased with a willingness to consider a full range of sexual experiences, attitudes, and preferences. The great influence that psychosocial influences have on human sexuality is the perspective on which they focus.

The authors immediately make one aware of two cultural legacies that can cloud issues in sexuality. The first, rooted in early Judeo-Christian ethics, restricts sexual union entirely to the purpose of reproduction, and its expression exclusively to coitus. The second deals with the rigidity of defined sex-roles and the limitations this places on interpersonal expression and growth. The reader is warned that these two legacies are still strong in our society and create problems by increasing suspicion about behavior and by devaluing the individual.

The focus in Part II is on biological concerns. The information given is complete and organized in such a way as to be easily understandable without loss of interest. This is accomplished because the authors skillfully include the reader as a participant learner, encouraging self-exploration of the genitals and other body parts as the descriptive anatomy is read in preparation for the class. What a wonderful teaching tool! In fact, throughout the text the authors are

never removed from the student and include many self-help and preventive health care examinations and exercises. This entire section on the "plumbing" components of sexuality is unusually well presented.

The third part deals with sexual behavior, using case histories within the psychosocial theme, but avoiding judgments on various type of behavior. In the excellent chapter on communications, the positive side of effective sexual communication is discussed, and techniques for obtaining openness, honesty, and mutual empathy are outlined.

Homosexuality is discussed as a part of the continuum of sexual orientations and again the authors' wise use of personal files helps to promote an awareness and understanding of various orientations and lifestyles. The homophobia section provides the student with the opportunity to reappraise his/her own personal feeling. The chapter on atypical sexual behaviors is brief but accurate. The section on sexual problems contains an especially informative chapter on sexually transmitted diseases.

The topic of the life cycle and sexuality is completely covered in Part V, a decided advantage because the student thus has an opportunity to view the whole growth process of sexuality, from birth through aging, in a chronological manner.

The book closes with a well-handled

discussion of the social aspects of sexual behavior, dealing with such topics as parenthood as an option, pregnancy, childbirth, birth control, sex and the law, and cross-cultural variations in sexual expression. The psychosocial theme of the book is reinforced in the last chapter with additional insight into how socialization influences various sexual behaviors and how diverse these behaviors are in other societies.

Each of the 22 chapters contains an extremely useful summary and a specific reading list. The easy-to-understand illustrations and the photographs include people of all ages, types, and races. A concise glossary is included. This text comes with a Student Guide (written by Gary R. Lesniak), a useful Instructor's Guide, plus a packet of 51 slides for projection.

Although obviously designed for an undergraduate class, the book proved very useful in my teaching of a continuing education course for high school teachers. It fulfilled their needs for both remedial sexuality learning and for increased awareness of the contemporary adolescent sexual behavior and philosophy. Because these adult students have numerous demands on their time, they want a textbook that is both informative and stimulating. This group especially approved of *Our Sexuality* because its case histories and anecdotes led to free and open discussions that enhanced the learning process. **A, PR**

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