

## SEXUALITY AND AMERICAN CATHOLIC THOUGHT: TWO NON-CATHOLIC VIEWS

**Human Sexuality: New Directions in American Catholic Thought.** Anthony Kosnik, William Carroll, Agnes Cunningham, Ronald Modras, and James Schulte. New York: The Paulist Press, 1977 (322 pp.; \$8.50).

*[While its conclusions have not been adopted by any official body of the church, this important work by five major American Catholic theologians is generating much discussion—not to say controversy—within the ranks of American Catholics because of the positive and open acceptance of human sexuality it espouses. But this book speaks to non-Catholics as well as to Catholics, and thus SIECUS asked two individuals, each a prominent theologian in his own faith—James B. Nelson, a Protestant minister and teacher, and Roland B. Gittelsohn, a Jewish rabbi and author—to look at this work from their own perspectives. Their thoughts follow.—Ed.]*

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The publication of this study is, without question, a major event in Roman Catholic interpretation of human sexuality, and it will have positive results for other religious communions as well. It is *not* an official Catholic declaration, as its authors take pains to make clear. Further, while it was commissioned by the Catholic Theological Society of America, it is "neither approved nor disapproved" by that group. Its stated purpose is that of "providing some helpful and illuminating guidelines in the present confusion" regarding sexual issues.

By and large, it admirably fulfills that purpose. But the book goes beyond the matter of moral guidelines for, more fundamentally, it challenges some basic theological and ethical assumptions which have underlain official Catholic sexual thought for centuries. The traditional and official Catholic approach, in my judgment, has been marked by these tendencies: (1) it has fastened upon certain biblical texts concerning sexual morality but has ignored the culturally conditioned nature of those passages; (2) it has been based upon a rigid and heavily biological interpretation of natural law; (3) it has been "act-focused" in its sexual judgments, as opposed to an emphasis on the quality of relationships and the variability of situations and contexts; (4) it has tended to ignore the plurality of theological-ethical perspectives within the Catholic church on sexual issues, in favor of articulating a single, uniform "magisterial" approach; (5) it has distrusted the ability of individual Christians to make

Especially for anyone who has begun to despair that the spirit of John XXIII in the Catholic church has entirely succumbed to that of Paul VI, this volume is an exciting harbinger of hope. It establishes that even in so sensitive an area as sex, the growing edge of Catholic thought is capable of change and can adapt itself to the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

Before being carried away with feverish enthusiasm, we must remind ourselves that these refreshing insights are far from official church doctrine. Indeed, they have already been repudiated by several high church authorities and condemned by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops. If the pope hasn't yet rejected this study, there can be little doubt that he will. The conclusions reached in this amazing volume have not even been officially approved by the Catholic Theological Society of America, which initiated the investigation in 1972, "received" it, and authorized its publication in 1976.

Still, the scholars who produced these findings include two priests, a nun, and two lay Catholic experts. The book was published by an official Catholic press. Even if it takes several generations—as it most probably will—for the church formally to accept it, Catholic thought on human sexuality will never again be the same. "Revolutionary" is the only label apposite to these recommendations.

How true this is can be appreciated only against a background of the traditional Catholic view, which our au-

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# SPEAKING OUT

## Then and Now

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I sometimes think about how I came to be a sex educator, and I recall my own struggle to obtain sexual information as I was growing up—a task made difficult in no small measure by the fact that I grew up Catholic.

The experience of being raised Catholic and of attending parochial schools is invariably a unifying life event for those who have participated in it. Even now—sixteen years after my graduation from Catholic high school and twelve years after Catholic college—I find a special joy in comparing notes and often commiserating with friends, acquaintances, and professional colleagues who are products of Catholic schools. There is always something to talk about, a set of similar circumstances to discuss. And that something is often our sex education.

What Catholic school graduates seem to share universally is a recollection of tremendous confusion, guilt, and ambivalence about sex—feelings now tempered by a sense of humor which may have taken many years to develop. Stories about aborted attempts to obtain information are rampant. What is singularly absent is the experience of a positive sex education program or of an affirming approach to sexuality.

In reading *Human Sexuality: New Directions in American Catholic Thought*, it is possible to acquire a better understanding of these feelings. While the major thrust of the book is the presentation of pastoral guidelines for responsible, growth-oriented sexual behavior, these guidelines are set against a backdrop of Catholic theology. The first two chapters review pertinent teachings of the Bible and Christian tradition, noting how interpretations throughout the centuries gave rise to a view of sexuality that was at best ambivalent and at worst negative, inconsistent, and devoid of realistic guidelines.

My own particular background is dotted with graphic "sex education memories":

*I am in the first grade in 1950. Sister Alexis is discussing the mystery and wonder of the Virgin Birth. It occurs to me that I don't know what she means. Having been taught to ask the meaning of words I don't understand, I inquire about the term "virgin." Sister Alexis, visibly shaken, tells me that I have asked a dirty question, and counsels me to discuss it with my mother. I decide it's safer to live without an answer. . . .*

*In the fifth grade, Sister Frances is telling the class that marriage is a sacrament, blessed by God, but*

*that there are some actions so vile, so heinous, so irremediably odious, that even married couples aren't allowed to participate in them. Some of us are scared by what she's said, some of us are dying of curiosity, but we all know instinctively not to ask for further elaboration. . . .*

*In 1959 I am a student in Sister Norbert's tenth-grade biology class when she announces that chapter 7 of our textbook will not be assigned or discussed, since everyone knows all about the subject matter already. The subject is human reproduction. . . .*

*It isn't until twelfth grade that positive school-related experiences occur. We are in our homeroom, one month before graduation. Sister Clarice gives the class an unannounced quiz. The average score is 20 percent. The topic of the quiz is sex education. Sister is appalled at the students' lack of knowledge and is moved to explain the facts of life. We are all very relieved and appreciative. . . .*

*In college, another positive memory stands out. We have an excellent course entitled "Marriage and the Family," in which we are encouraged to evaluate divergent opinions. We study the Bible and Catholic*

SIECUS REPORT

Volume VI, Number 3

January 1978

The *SIECUS Report* is published bi-monthly. Subscriptions are sold on a volume basis only, with volumes beginning in September.

Subscription rates: Individual, \$10.00 for one year; Canadian and foreign, £5. Institutional, \$18.00; Canadian and foreign, £9. Single copies of any issue, \$1.50.

Queries about subscriptions and delivery should be sent to Human Sciences Press, 72 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10011 (overseas office: 3 Henrietta Street, London, England WC2E 8LU). Editorial queries should be sent to SIECUS at the address below.

*SIECUS Report* is available on microfilm from University Microfilms, 300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106.

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Library of Congress catalog card number 72-627361

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tradition (much as they are presented in *Human Sexuality*) and we learn the current teachings on all aspects of sexuality, including contraception. But we also are told that there is dissent in the church on several of these aspects, especially contraception, and we are assigned readings from certain controversial Dutch theologians. Classroom discussion focuses on the complexity of these issues and on the individual's responsibility to "inform his conscience."

I have no doubt that this college course changed my life. What I remember is not so much the names of those dissenting theologians or even the name of the priest who taught the course; what I remember is that we were exposed to a way of evaluating moral dilemmas—a way that made sense to me and that I was ready to use.

Twelve years later I am seeing a very similar approach to decision-making being offered in *Human Sexuality: New Directions in American Catholic Thought*. The book was commissioned by the Catholic Theological Society of America for the purpose of "providing some helpful and illuminating guidelines" on human sexuality. The commission—five Catholic theologians, academicians, and pastoral counselors—approached the task not solely through the teachings of the Bible and tradition, but also through evaluation of data available from the empirical sciences. They propose a theology of human sexuality based on the principle that wholesome sexual activity is that which fosters "creative growth toward integration." This critical tenet is then applied in the ensuing discussion of principles to be considered in the evaluation of specific sexual behavior. These sections serve as a framework for the second half of the book, in which the real work of the Commission, the formulation of pastoral guidelines, is addressed.

This presentation of guidelines will surely be the most controversial aspect of the book. It discusses marriage, parenthood, contraception, sterilization, artificial insemination, child-free marriage, nonmarital sexuality, masturbation, pornography, and sex education, among other topics, approaching all issues with an openness to their growth-producing potential as well as their dangers. Of particular note to sex educators is the authors' strong stand in favor of age-appropriate instruction about sexuality and their recognition of the needs of adults, as well as children, in this regard.

The influence of *Human Sexuality* will be widespread and diverse. No doubt the wide coverage in the secular press that attended its publication is based on the fact that many of the conclusions are in direct opposition to the most recent Vatican pronouncements on human sexuality (Pope Paul VI, "Humanae Vitae," Rome, July 25, 1969; and Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, "Declaration on Certain Questions Concerning Sexual Ethics," Rome, January 22, 1976). The dissenting aspects of this book should serve to increase dialogue on the issues both within and outside the Catholic church. Within the church, such dialogue will surely find many Catholics threatened by the book's liberal stances—at least relative to those of the Vatican. On the other hand, some will feel comfortable with most of the book's conclusions, whereas others will wish that its guidelines would allow for even greater flexibility in personal decision-making.

In light of the findings of recent studies of the sexual

behavior and opinions of American Catholics [Charles F. Westoff and Elise F. Jones, "The Secularization of U.S. Catholic Birth Control Practices," *Family Planning Perspectives* 9, no. 5 (September-October 1977), pp. 203-7; and A. M. Greeley, W. C. McCready, and K. McCourt, *Catholic Schools in a Declining Church* (Kansas City: Sheed and Ward, 1976). Similar findings are revealed in a new secular survey, *The Redbook Report on Female Sexuality*, by Carol Tavis and Susan Sadd (New York: Delacorte Press, 1977), pp. 38-43.] which indicate that a huge gap exists between official teaching and actual practice, I would expect that this important study will help many of the faithful to feel better about what they are already doing. And since the Vatican's staunch position on sexuality has been a major stumbling block for many American Catholics, causing some to discontinue their practice of Catholicism, this new work could give hope to the disaffiliated—and I count myself among their number—that the distance between themselves and their church may well be diminishing.

## DO YOU KNOW THAT...

### Sex Education Coalition of Metropolitan Washington

Beginning in 1975 with a small group of people who had worked together during National Family Sex Education Week and who wanted a continuing forum for an exchange of information and resources, the Sex Education Coalition of Metropolitan Washington has grown until it now involves over 400 individuals in Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia. Unique in that it includes people from many different disciplines and interest groups—from health and helping professionals and teachers to government administrators, school board members, and public-minded citizens—the Coalition represents varying viewpoints in the sex education field.

In addition to its bimonthly meetings on specific topics designed to improve skills or to initiate and develop programs, the Coalition distributes a newsletter containing information on workshops and training, reviews of resource materials, descriptions of specific programs, etc. Other services include compilation and distribution of a bibliography of locally available audio-visual materials, the development of a "people resource file," and technical assistance to special groups and schools. The Coalition's annual Media Fair had over 150 participants in 1977.

Future plans include designing low-cost training and workshop programs in specific areas of interest. These dialogue-oriented sessions, where the participants can develop skills, techniques, and knowledge, and can interact with their colleagues, are to meet a stated need of those working in the field of sex/family life education.

For further information on the Coalition and/or its programs, write to John Muller and Joan Benesch, Co-chairpersons, Sex Education Coalition of Metropolitan Washington, 2635 16th Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20009.

# LEGAL BRIEFS

"Legal Briefs" is prepared by Ralph Slovenko, LL.B., Ph.D., Professor of Law and Psychiatry, Wayne State University Law School, Detroit, Michigan.

## University Recognition of Gay Student Organization

The United States Court of Appeals, Eighth Circuit, has joined the First and Fourth Circuits [*Gay Students Organization of Univ. of New Hampshire v. Bonner*, 509 F.2d 652 (1st Cir. 1974); *Gay Alliance of Students v. Matthews*, 544 F.2d 162 (4th Cir. 1976)] in holding that a state-run university may not constitutionally withhold recognition of a student organization, comprised largely of homosexuals, whose basic purpose allegedly is to provide a forum for a discussion of homosexuality [*Gay Lib v. University of Missouri*, 558 F.2d 848 (8th Cir. 1977), noted in 3 *Sex. L. Rptr.* 37 1977].

Gay Lib's victory in the Eighth Circuit came some six years after its first attempt to gain formal recognition at the University of Missouri. In 1971 the student government at the university voted to recommend recognition of Gay Lib, but the dean of student affairs vetoed it. He based his veto on "a concern for the impact of recognition on the general relationship of the University to the public at large" (though university policy with respect to recognition of campus groups provides that "recognition of an organization does not constitute approval or endorsement of the organization's aims and activities"). Gay Lib appealed to the university's Board of Curators. That body appointed a fact-finder. He recommended that the university deny recognition to Gay Lib, based on his findings that homosexuality is a compulsive type of behavior and that recognition of Gay Lib would tend to increase the incidence of homosexuality on campus. His findings of fact included:

There are potential or latent homosexuals, i.e. persons who come into adolescence or young adulthood unaware that they have homosexual tendencies, but who have fears of sexual relations with a member of the opposite sex.

What happens to a latent or potential homosexual from the standpoint of his environment can cause him to become or not to become a homosexual.

That homosexuality is an illness and should and can be treated as such and is clearly abnormal behavior.

Certain homosexual practices violate provisions of [the sodomy laws of the state].

The Board of Curators followed the fact-finder's recommendation and denied recognition.

Thereupon, Gay Lib sought relief in federal district court. Relief was there denied. The district court found that recognition of Gay Lib would likely result in imminent violations of the state's sodomy laws. The district court placed reliance on the testimony of two psychiatrists, Dr. Harold Voth and Dr. Charles Socarides. Dr. Voth testified that formal recognition would tend to "perpetuate" or "expand" homosexual behavior. Dr. Socarides stated that "wherever you have a

convocation of homosexuals, you are going to have increased homosexual activities which, of course, includes sodomy." He concluded that "any gathering would certainly promote such sexual contact."

The Court of Appeals, Eighth Circuit, reversed on two grounds. First, it rejected the psychiatric testimony upon which the district court relied. It noted that the testimony of Drs. Voth and Socarides turned "solely on conclusory 'inferences' and 'belief,' for which no historical or empirical basis is disclosed." Second, the Court of Appeals held that even if it were to accept the district court's conclusion that Gay Lib's presence on campus would render homosexual activity "more likely," this would still be "insufficient to justify a governmental prior restraint on the right of a group of students to associate for the purposes avowed in their [policy statement]."

The Gay Lib's policy statement was set forth as follows:

(a) To provide a dialogue between the homosexual and heterosexual members of the university community.

(b) To dispel the lack of information and develop an understanding of the homosexual at the University of Missouri.

(c) To alleviate the unnecessary burden of shame felt by the local homosexual population.

(d) To help educate the community and the homosexual to understand the social roles that the homosexual now plays in the community.

(e) To work closely with established university and community groups for a broader sharing of knowledge and information.

The Eighth Circuit noted that while it is difficult to articulate generalized standards as to the quantum and quality of proof necessary to justify the abridgement of First Amendment rights, it seemed that "a far greater showing of likelihood of imminent lawless action than that presented here" would be required. The court noted the absence of any finding that Gay Lib, at least in the record presented, advocated any unlawful activity or would infringe reasonable campus rules, interrupt classes, or substantially interfere with the opportunity of other students to obtain an education. The court said that to ascribe evil connotations to the group simply because they are homosexuals "smacks of penalizing persons for their status rather than their conduct, which is constitutionally impermissible."

A dissenting member of the three-judge panel would have affirmed the district court, believing that "evidence amply justified the considered decision of the University officials to deny recognition to Gay Lib."

The issue is in litigation in other circuits.

# WHERE THE ACTION IS

## Reflections of a Dean Who Is "Into Sex"

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During one of our summer orientation weekends a few years ago, the mother of a student told me she had been referred to me by her discussion-group leader because she had raised a question relative to sexuality and was told "See Dean Dobens. He's into sex on the campus." Before I could answer the woman's specific question, I had to explain what being "into sex on campus" really meant.

Sexuality, as I am sure we all agree, is a topic which has always been "on campus" but it has not really come out of the closet for open and honest discussion until recent years.

I can recall working in another institution during the early 1960s which had a separate men's and women's college within the same university. The dean at the women's college suspended a student because she was pregnant and not married and, upon receiving the name of the male student involved, her counterpart at my institution asked the male student to come in to see him for counseling, but no further action was taken. An interesting but sad commentary on the "double standard."

Also, the dean at the men's college saw no reason to include a ladies room in a new residence hall being planned, because "ladies" did not visit men in a residence hall.

The same deans, now no longer deaning, were also strongly opposed to permitting visitation hours in the residence halls, for they felt that such permissiveness would definitely lead to a significant number of additional unwanted pregnancies.

Those of us who survived the 1960s on college campuses have learned to live with "open 24-hour visitations" and, in general, without any significant increase in unwanted pregnancies. I believe this has been in part because we accepted a responsibility for providing programs in the area of human sexuality with all the problems inherent in attempting to approach this particularly sensitive topic.

One of the basic problems in attempting to establish a broadly based program in human sexuality on a small private campus, without the facilities of a teaching hospital or medical school for support, is the lack of awareness, acceptance, and support from all levels that there is, in fact, a need for programming of this nature.

In order to determine the extent of need on my particular campus, I applied for and received support for a Faculty Research Council grant to administer the Sex Knowledge and Attitude Test (SKAT) to a sample of our student body. (Although the SKAT was initially developed for use with

graduate students, enough undergraduate institutions have used it that comparative scales are available.) The results of my study demonstrated a need for additional educational programming in the area of human sexuality.

During this period, my institution was moving from an all-male to a male/female institution, and the process of convincing people of the need for programming in this area was enhanced somewhat by the presence of young women on the campus. Previously, with an all-male institution, programming dealing with sexuality just wasn't necessary in the eyes of many people. This type of logic obviously did a significant amount of harm, in my opinion, to a number of men who graduated from our institution, for I feel I could present as strong an argument for programs in sexuality for a single-sex institution as I could for a coeducational institution.

In order to administer the SKAT to one class, I agreed to provide a lecture to the class on "Human Sexuality on the College Campus." As a result of that presentation, a group of students came forward expressing an interest in establishing a "hot line" to provide an opportunity for information on sexuality for our students. Initially this group was recognized as the "Birth Control Information Center" but presently is more aptly titled "The Sexuality Counseling and Information Center."

Representatives of this group became part of a student membership of a committee to select a new director of our college infirmary. This led to the selection of a physician who had a supportive interest in providing a "preventative medicine" approach to sexuality, both in the infirmary and on the campus. The director was also interested in providing his expertise in the classroom on the topic of sexuality, and was led to believe during the interview process that this could be an option open to him.

The director and I attempted on two occasions to obtain approval for a credit-bearing course in human sexuality, but to no avail. We felt it important to offer the course for credit for two major reasons: it officially identifies human sexuality as an area worthy of study, and it provides the opportunity for both students and faculty to prepare and participate fully within the normal academic schedule without acting as the additional burden on time and commitments which a non-credit course can too easily become.

Our proposals for such a course were made in great detail, and on the second presentation we even included the concept of a team of academicians to preview the audio-

visuals we planned to use in an attempt to insure that they were "acceptable to the mores of our community." The second denial was one of the reasons that the director of the infirmary resigned his position.

Fortunately, the present infirmary staff, again selected with input from the Sexuality Counseling and Information Center, have continued to provide the same type of services and, in fact, spend a significant amount of time educating students at the infirmary about their bodies and not simply dispensing pills. They continue to work closely with the Sexuality Counseling and Information Center which, in conjunction with the infirmary, has begun to offer for sale nonprescription contraceptives.

As the Sexuality Counseling and Information Center grew in scope, a more extensive training process for the peers who served as volunteers was established, in conjunction with the infirmary and other key personnel on campus. Also, because it was recognized that students frequently turn to the resident advisors in their residence halls for counsel on this subject, and in addition to providing each resident advisor with copies of *Our Bodies, Ourselves*, and McCary's *Human Sexuality*, sessions were added to the resident advisor in-service training program on the topic of sexuality. An outgrowth of that experience was a January independent study experience in the area of sexuality which I offered, as well as a series of lectures on sexuality jointly sponsored by my office and the Sexuality and Counseling Information Center, as well as a noncredit course.

(Because of my previous experiences, I have not attempted again to obtain approval for a credit course in human sexuality. And, indeed, the additional demands on my time made by the noncredit course were such that until some present responsibilities are reassigned, it will be unlikely that I will be able to find time to offer another noncredit course again in the near future.)

One caveat in establishing any kind of human sexuality course on campus pertains to finding the teaching faculty. Without the resources of a teaching hospital or medical school, there may be difficulty in finding qualified personnel either to participate in an actual course or to provide lectures on the subject of sexuality. One obviously must be very cautious about simply turning to a physician or a local minister, recognizing that it has been only within the last decade or so that courses in sexuality have been provided to them in their formal training. Fortunately, a number of good films are presently available covering a wide variety of topics, and, of course, there are always qualified people from Planned Parenthood, if one seeks them out. There have been campuses similar to mine where successful programming in sexuality has been achieved. Hamilton and Kirkland Colleges, in Clinton, New York, for example, have had an excellent series on masculinity. Hobart and William Smith Colleges are presently planning a similar program for the forthcoming academic year.

Although growth in programming in this area on campuses such as mine has been gradual, a number of my colleagues have found impossible roadblocks. At one institution, for example, the college physician, who is retired and in his late seventies, happens to be a member of the college Board of Trustees and is chairman of the trustee Committee on Student Life. Because of his attitude, the trustees have become involved in an area usually delegated to the on-

campus governance system, for they have established a policy prohibiting the issuance of contraceptives of any type in the infirmary, and in addition, they do not permit any services related to sexuality at all on the campus. As a result, students have been forced to use the local Planned Parenthood, which, because of the institution's geographical location, is presently overburdened with cases from within the regular community. Consequently, the college was informed that, beginning with the fall term 1977, the Planned Parenthood group would no longer be able to offer services to students.

At another college which has a physical education requirement based on the philosophy of the need for "a sound body to match a sound mind" through the concept of carryover sports, a parent approached the dean of students at Commencement, with a concern: "If you can justify your physical education requirement, a philosophy which I support, how can you not offer a course in human sexuality? In addition to having a need for a carryover sport to keep her body in good physical condition, my daughter will also have a need for greater information than you have provided relative to her body in the area of sexuality."

At another institution, during a reception for Phi Beta Kappa seniors a student approached the speaker, a key administrator known to be against the concept of course credit for courses in human sexuality on that campus. During his presentation, the administrator had asked the initiates the question, "Have you received an adequate liberal arts education during your four years here?" The student responded that he had been shortchanged, he felt, for, although he knew how to dissect a frog, he knew practically nothing about his own body let alone that of the woman he was engaged to. The student explained further that in order for one to reach the nearly impossible goal of being truly educated, each person must understand himself, including one's physical makeup, at least in the area of sexuality. The response from the administrator was that sexuality courses were not appropriate within the liberal arts curriculum for "sex was something one learns by rubbing elbows."

On one campus, the president of the university, who had a very conservative attitude on sexuality programming, purposely overlooked promoting one of his staff to a key administrative position because that staff member had differed with him over the need for services and programming in this area.

Some people have thought it paradoxical that I, as a college dean, am "into sex," for when they were in college it was the dean who always seemed to be so much against permitting social relationships to develop to that point. Fortunately, many of my colleagues are becoming sensitive to the needs for programming in this area, and as a result, participation and attendance at various national and regional conferences on presentations relative to sexuality programming and counseling on college campuses continues to rise.

In my own professional life, I have found that the presence of my AASECT certification as a sex educator, hanging on my office wall near the shelf of books dealing with sexuality, has frequently been used by students and parents to raise questions on sexuality by simply referring to the certification document, and has served for many as an opener to a number of discussions which have proved helpful to all concerned. Also, students with a concern of a

sexual nature, including same-sex relationships, have either been referred to me by faculty or by other students, in an attempt to discuss and work through some of their concerns about their own sexuality.

Although somewhat frustrated in my attempts to provide a more formalized experience within the classroom through a credit course in human sexuality, I have found that one simply does not give up but continues to use the various other resources open on a small campus. The experience of

one-to-one contacts in my office; advising the Sexuality Counseling and Information Center; periodic lectures in classes; in-service training with the resident advisors—all have been avenues by which I, and similar members of my profession on campuses across the country, have begun to make a dent in providing students with those sexuality programs and services which we as educators know that they need and deserve.

## DO YOU KNOW THAT . . .

### Resources to Write for . . .

**Am I Parent Material?** a small, folded leaflet produced by the National Organization for Nonparents, contains a series of some 40 questions that NON believes should be answered by every individual before making the decision to have a child. The questions are generally grouped around four areas: "Am I ready to raise a child?" "What do I expect to gain from the parenting experience?" "Have I adequately discussed the parenting question with my partner?" and "Is my lifestyle conducive to parenting?" The questions are all thought-provoking, so that the exercise of answering them for oneself can prove to be highly educational. Quantities under 50 are available at 6¢ each; larger orders are cheaper. For information, write to: National Organization for Nonparents, 806 Reistertown Road, Baltimore, MD 21208.

**Medical Treatment of Minors Under New York Law**, a report by the Committee on Medicine and Law of the Association of the Bar of the City of New York, is specifically designed to help providers of services understand what New York law permits. On sex-related health care, physicians and licensed health agencies may provide contraception and abortion services to teenagers capable of giving their own informed consent; parental consent, involvement, or notification is not required. Furthermore, not only is the right of minors to treatment protected, but, "where the minor can effectively consent for his or her own medical care, the minor also has the right to refuse treatment." For a copy of this report, send 25¢ to: Planned Parenthood of New York City, 300 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10010.

**Sexuality and Aging** is a delightful, very simple, and therefore useful short pamphlet recently published. It is dedicated to "All Aging People," but it should certainly be read by attendants in institutions and most particularly by families of the aging. Physicians could well keep this on hand for their older patients. The author, Mona Wasow, is clinical assistant professor at the School of Social Work, University of Wisconsin-Madison. This pamphlet (#300) is available from the author; single copies are 75¢ (bulk rates given on request). Write to: Mona Wasow, 1120 Edgehill Drive, Madison, WI 53705.

**Sex Is a Touchy Subject** is the apt title of a selected bibliography of books, pamphlets, and films on sex and sexuality for young adults developed by a committee of the Bay Area

Young Adult Librarians, in San Francisco. The result of almost two years of voracious reading and reviewing, seeking the "best (and worst) materials available to young adults on the subject of sexuality and sex-related topics," its emphasis is on materials which present "positive and supportive images of sexuality and sexual behavior for young adults." The categories used are Plumbing, Sexuality, Love and Romance, Films, and Useful Pamphlets. A title index is included.

There were no sacred cows to these inquiring minds, so, depending on your point of view, you will be informed, have your opinions confirmed or flouted, be edified—but certainly entertained. To order, send \$2.00 to: Richard Russo, BAYA, 2343 San Juan Avenue, Walnut Creek, CA 94596.

### International Meeting Seeks Papers

The Third International Congress of Medical Sexology, to be held in Rome on October 25–28, 1978, sponsored by thirteen national and international organizations, including SIECUS, has issued a call for papers. Presentations should be of fifteen to thirty minutes' duration, and audio-visual materials are also sought. Among the topics to be discussed are sexuality across the life span, variations in sexual lifestyle, ethical and legal issues in sex education, sex therapy and sex research, advances in sex education for students or health professionals, advances in sex therapy, and sex differences in cognition and behavior. For further information, contact Clive Davis, Chairman, Scientific Committee of the U.S., Department of Psychology, Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY 13210.

### Sex Education in Central America

Delegates from the Ministries of Education and from Family Planning Associations in Central America, Panama, and the Dominican Republic, met in March 1977 at the First Regional Seminar on Sex Education in El Salvador. Dr. Regelio Sanchez, minister of education of the host country, inaugurated the seminar and emphasized the urgency of implementing a sex education and family planning program. He called on the governments represented to step up the development of such programs in their countries.

Among the recommendations formulated and sent up to the ministers of education in Central America were inclusion of sex education in teacher-training curricula; setting up and developing sex education training programs for members of agencies working for change already having projects which include sex education; and development of adequate and pertinent communications materials on sex education.

# BOOK REVIEWS

**The Redbook Report on Female Sexuality.** Carol Tavris and Susan Sadd. New York: Delacorte Press, 1977 (199 pp.; \$8.95).

Reviewed by Alan P. Bell, Ph.D., Senior Research Psychologist, Institute for Sex Research, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN; Chairperson, SIECUS Board of Directors.

This study, initiated by SIECUS Board member Robert J. Levin prior to his untimely death and completed by two female social psychologists, is based upon data provided by thousands of women who took time out from their comfortable lives to respond to seventy-five closed-ended questions published in the October 1974 issue of *Redbook* magazine. The 2278 women were drawn at random from the 100,000 who replied to the questionnaire. They served as the investigators' "basic sample," tending to be younger, better educated, and more affluent than American women in general. The largest number lived either in the North-Central or Mid-Atlantic states, had attended college, were not working, and reported a family income of at least \$15,000 a year. Excluding the relatively small number of unmarried respondents from their basic sample, the authors focus their attention upon the premarital, marital, and extramarital experiences of married women, most of whom appear to be happy individuals, content with their marriages, and sexually fulfilled in their marital relationships. While the authors acknowledge the bias in such a relatively homogeneous sample, they maintain that some sort of bias is inevitable (agreed), and hold that the women in their sample are probably more typical of American females than those, for example, in

*The Hite Report*. (I suspect here that stacking up the biases inherent in the sampling methods of both studies might end up in a draw. I would especially wonder whether the *Redbook* reader really is typical of the American female—whoever she may be!)

Nevertheless, a particular strength of the present study involves the authors' juxtaposition of their findings with those of other investigators such as Kinsey et al., Vener and Stewart, Kantner and Zelnick, and Morton Hunt. These comparisons result in a remarkable consensus with respect to the incidence of various features of women's sexual lives and indicate, at least to my satisfaction, that the *Redbook* women after all are perhaps not so very different from others apt to be interviewed in studies of this kind. Besides, the authors are not as anxious to establish the incidence of a particular sexual experience as they are to study the relationship between sexuality and women's demographic characteristics, and such dependent variables as marital happiness. Thus, while the authors report the number of respondents who do this or that in their sexual lives, they go beyond such tabulations in an attempt to show their psychological and marital correlates. For example, while they report (like Kinsey et al.) that younger, less religiously devout females are more apt to engage in coitus prior to marriage and that young women are (unlike Kinsey's sample) less likely to restrict premarital coitus to only a short time before marriage, the investigators go on to show that whether or not a woman has had this experience bears no relationship to how satisfied she is with her marriage. While most American women may not have, like the *Redbook* women, a

"happy, sexy marriage," the study's more important and perhaps controversial findings are: that the quality of sexual contact within marriage is positively related to its quantity; that the more conventionally religious a woman is the happier she is apt to be with both her sex life and her marriage; and that communication between a wife and her husband has a greater impact on marital happiness than whatever else, good or bad, occurs within a marriage.

In the third major section of the book, dealing with extramarital experience, the authors report, as they do elsewhere, both *Old News* and *New News*. About the same percentage (less than one-third) of the women in their sample, as in Kinsey's, reported having had at least one extramarital affair, the difference being that the *Redbook* women tended to have had such experiences earlier on in their marriages. While those who had ever been sexually involved with someone other than their husband tended to rate their marriages less positively than those who had not, a relatively large number were as happy with their husbands as those who had remained "faithful." Most affairs appear to have been casual and short-lived, having no particular effect on the ongoing marital relationship. The book concludes with a chapter by the senior author entitled "Good News About Men," in which she describes the extent to which men and women are becoming increasingly similar in their sexual behaviors and fantasies. She maintains that as the gap between men and women continues to close, marital relationships will become more fulfilling than even the present data suggest. Whether or not that prediction or the authors' celebration of married people's lives have much validity,

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*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.

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the volume clearly goes far in correcting what may be an equally erroneous and opposite impression—that marriage is little more than a can of worms meant only for those “fit to be tied.”

It should be mentioned in closing that the *Redbook Report* is not only worth reading by anyone interested in getting a handle on married women’s sexual whereabouts, but also makes for enjoyable reading for anyone familiar with the stodgy tomes so often found in similar literature. There are tables, to be sure, but these are overshadowed by the authors’ introduction of their material with poetry and short selections from the works of such people as Sylvia Plath, D. H. Lawrence, and Flaubert, by their inclusion of a host of interesting open-ended material from the respondents themselves, and by the informal and sometimes amusing style in which the findings are discussed. Regardless of whatever else might be said about their work, the authors deserve special congratulations for the way in which they tell their story. They have done more than their “homework”—and done it very well indeed. **A, PR**

**Ethical Issues in Sex Therapy.** William Masters, Virginia Johnson, and Robert Kolodny, eds. Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1977 (227 pp.; \$12.50).

Reviewed by Harmon L. Smith, B.D., Ph.D., Professor of Moral Theology and Professor of Community and Family Medicine, The Divinity School, Durham, N.C.

This collection of essays and transcribed conversations is the result of a 1976 conference, organized and sponsored by the Reproductive Biology Research Foundation with the purpose of “identifying and discussing the fundamental ethical issues in therapeutic and investigative approaches to human sexuality.” Papers on a variety of topics (historical background, theological perspectives, consent, confidentiality, variant forms of human sexual behavior, sex therapy, and the training of therapists), together with designated and general discussion, explore the many-faceted and sometimes confused and conflicting ethical dimensions of sex therapy and research.

Since one cannot, in so brief a space, comment on the full range of particulars which are treated in this book, perhaps some impressions are appropriate. I think that this volume is accurate in its identification of most of the urgent ethical issues which derive from and impinge upon therapy and research in human sexuality; and in my experience, it presents a fair picture of the kinds of questions that are raised when different professionals venture to talk together about a common topic—each is well-informed about some things but mis- or uninformed about some others; some want to clarify; some want to defend; some want to explore; some prefer to confirm what they already believe; and so it goes. We are probably still some distance from consensus about the resolution of issues; but this book is a step forward toward achieving at least some agreement about what those issues are.

Except for one or two instances, the contextualization of human sexuality is largely ignored; and knowledge of physiology, sexual response, and other kinds of scientific inquiry are sought and affirmed in order to respond to disease or dysfunction. The combination of research *qua* research and research *cum* therapy may seem, on the face of it, appropriate; but I tend to think that more specific attention is wanted for defining the human setting of human sexual pathology and human sexual therapy. That may be part of the agenda for another meeting which is scheduled for 1978; in the meantime a good start has been made by providing a forum for these important matters, and we can look forward with interest to the attempt in the next conference to formulate a cohesive and responsible set of ethical guidelines for this field. **A, PR**

**Woman’s Body: An Owner’s Manual.** The Diagram Group. New York: Paddington Press, Ltd., 1977 (248 pp.; \$6.95 paper).

Reviewed by Evalyn S. Gendel, M.D., member, SIECUS Board of Directors.

“An Atlas of Anatomy and Physiology for Everywoman” would well be a more descriptive but less interesting title for this book. The text is a

straightforward, factual presentation about female growth and development from birth to death, with all bases covered regarding the cycles within this developmental picture, from embryo to aging and dying.

The Diagram Group which prepared the material, and is the only “author” listed, consists of an English firm comprised of a major visual arts staff—an editor, Ann Kramer, and an associate, David Heidenstair. There is a list of six contributors, two researchers, and an editorial staff of two. Twelve artists and assistant artists are listed. I mention this composition of the Group because, in spite of their relatively small numbers (twenty-four), they were able to accomplish an innovative and unusual task which should be highly useful to many women from all social and educational backgrounds.

Following this is the basic objective of the manual, arranged in atlas form with the subjects tabulated into thirteen broad areas: Growth and Development, Sexuality, Contraception, Pregnancy, Abortion, Menopause, Parts of the Body, Food, Self-Help, Mind and Body, Illness, Aging, and Man’s Body. The text of these sections is placed immediately next to the illustrations (all line-drawing plates) which are themselves clear, well-labeled diagrams. No section deviates from the pattern; for example, under *Aging* the subtopics Process of Aging, the Mind and Senses, Disorders of Age, and the Experience of Aging, amount to seven pages of specific drawings of the silhouette of a woman from puberty through around eighty years of age. These demonstrate sequential changes in the skeleton, skin, posture, breast tissue, etc., accompanied by parallel boxes of text which discuss similar changes in the brain and sensory organs. Major disorders related only to aging are delineated, with references to resources to validate the information or as resources for services. The section on the experience of aging hews to the same formula and successfully conveys the key role attitudes play in the aging process.

The language throughout is non-technical. Where certain medical phrases cannot be avoided they are carefully defined. To provide a better understanding of the approach used, the section on Growth and Development includes several illustrations and text on ethnic patterns worldwide relat-

ing to the factors of body type, skin color, skeletal structure, etc. The impact is quickly made that variations are external and slight and depend primarily on diet and environment. Other parts of the section are traditional descriptions of the hormonal changes from the time of conception through intrauterine life, and the stages of growth after birth throughout one's lifetime.

In the section on Self Help the topics are: Know your Body; Self-Examination; Alternative Treatments; Keeping Fit; Yoga; Rape—Facts and Myths; Rape and the Courts; and preventing Rape. The diagrammatic explanations and descriptions are concise and sharp. I have given these examples fully because the subjects covered are far more inclusive in each section of the book than those encountered in other texts.

Throughout each section all topics are presented with the full range of options that are available where medication, treatment, and/or physician's care are indicated. Although a panel of women physicians was used to review all of the material, the authors attempted to include their differing views of preventive and therapeutic care. That doctors hold conflicting opinion is one point made to help the reader become a better informed consumer.

Although the Diagram Group emphasizes that the organization of the manual and its content will hopefully help women increase their confidence in and appreciation of themselves, I had a basic concern that some women would regard the book much in the same manner that an "Owner's Manual" for an automobile is often viewed. First, comparing the body with a piece of machinery which comes with such instructions, and second, reading the manual the first time that trouble develops, rather than as soon as one gets the new car, are impressions which are misleading and could decrease the use of the book itself.

The strengths of this work, however, add up to a positive result for both men and women. It is an excellent reference book for therapists and counsellors to use with patients, for sex educators and other professionals to recommend for a succinct exposition of sexual anatomy and physiology as well as related aspects of social, physical, and emotional growth and development, health care, and special issues in the life stages of

men and women.

The cross reference of diagrams, text, extensive bibliography, and list of resources makes this an easy-access, comprehensive book on women—their sex and sexuality—of practical use for both sexes. **A, PR**

**Sexual Counseling Skills Workshop: A Trainer's Handbook.** Robert R. Wilson. Chapel Hill, N.C.: Carolina Population Center, 1977 (77 pp.; \$2.00 paper).

*Reviewed by Gary F. Kelly, M.Ed., Director of Student Development Center and Coordinator of Human Sexuality Program, Clarkson College, Potsdam, N.Y.; member, SIECUS Advisory Panel.*

As its title states, this is a manual for those organizing and conducting workshops in basic sex counseling skills. It is a synthesis of material and approaches drawn from workshops presented by the publishing agency. The programs are aimed at improving the fundamental knowledge and communication skills necessary for effective sex counseling by helping professionals. The suggested training is not in-depth, but would be appropriate as a beginning step for professionals who sometimes deal with sex-related concerns in their patients, clients, or students.

The training described follows a typical format, with a three-phase presentation. A break of several weeks separates each phase. The first phase involves sexual attitude reassessment, and this constitutes the most detailed section of the handbook. A variety of self-awareness and values-clarification approaches are described, including some new to this reviewer. In lieu of using costly explicit films, the author suggests an interesting personal sharing technique as part of the reassessment process. The second phase involves training in specific communication skills, and the third is a set of "follow-on" sessions to examine case studies. These sections of the *Handbook* are treated briefly, with some sample outlines and activities.

There are a few negative features of the booklet. Use of the male pronoun stands out, especially in reference to workshop coordinators. Few of the books listed as resources were pub-

lished after 1974, so some excellent books are not included. Addresses of a few resource organizations and publishers, including that of SIECUS, are out-of-date. These inadequacies should be corrected in future printings.

All in all, this would be a useful manual for anyone beginning to offer training workshops in basic sex counseling skills. The planning approaches are excellent, and there is good practical guidance for the actual design and publicizing of workshops, as well as for dealing with potential technical problems. There are many excellent questionnaires, forms, and exercises which are adaptable to diverse settings. The *Handbook* would also be a good springboard for further ideas, and a guide to further sources of help. **PR**

**Homosexuality Bibliography: Supplement, 1970–1975.** William Parker. Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1977 (343 pp.; \$12.50).

*Reviewed by Mary S. Calderone, M.D., President of SIECUS.*

A previous issue of the *SIECUS REPORT* reviewed *Homosexuality: A Selective Bibliography of Over 3,000 Items*, and called it "a superb job." That bibliography, published in 1971, covered the cumulative period through 1969 and was prepared by William Parker.

Mr. Parker has carried on with the project and his supplement covering the years 1970–1975 has just appeared. It is in the same format as the original volume in which "The entries are numbered and arranged in categories by the type of publication in which the item appeared, including books, documents, dissertations, articles from the popular press and religious, legal, medical/scientific, and other specialized journals. Additional listings include court cases involving consenting adults, literary works, feature films and television programs dealing with homosexual themes, as well as selections from various homophile publications." (See *SIECUS Report*, Vol. 1, No. 2, November 1972.)

The same categories are found in the supplement, and it is obvious that no library that pretends to adequate coverage of human sexuality would be complete without both books. **A, PR**

# WHERE THE ACTION IS

## Thoughts on Preadolescent Pregnancies

Compiled by Mary S. Calderone, M.D.,  
and Terry R. Herb, M.A.

*Requests for contraceptive advice from girls as young as nine years old are posing a problem in San Francisco.*

*The Planned Parenthood Federation there says a special program will have to be created because—apart from the question of whether the parents of such young girls should be notified—the association's information pamphlets are too complex for a nine-year-old.*

*Nor would it be medically advisable to provide oral contraceptives to a girl unless she had had regular menstrual periods for at least a year.*

*In California there were 32 births to 12-year-old mothers during 1974.*

This disquieting item appeared in the March-April 1976 issue of the International Planned Parenthood Federation's *IPPF News*. SIECUS subsequently mailed copies of the item to all of its Associates, requesting comments on their personal response to the situation and on what the adult world can do about it.

Ninety-seven Associates (a little more than 10 percent of the total) mailed in personal and professional comments. By more than three to one these Associates opposed—on a personal level—providing contraceptives to such young people. Far more interesting, however, were their professional comments on what could be done. These tended to group around three major emphases: (1) there should be more sex education in the schools; (2) parental involvement and sex education in the home is vital; and (3) there is a necessity for more research in the field before conclusions can be drawn.

### Comments

The Associates offered some individual suggestions and observations. These have been condensed here so that the several points of view can easily be scanned. While the majority of the Associates did not give permission to use their names, their ideas were included wherever appropriate. (Names are cited when permission was given and a unique point of view was offered.)

A concern was expressed over exploitation or a closely related issue. One respondent felt that men run things, are in control, and it is "expedient" to get along with them. And, since men value women who are young and physically attractive more as sex partners than as child producers, young girls attempt to achieve status by becoming masturbatory receptacles for males.

Another respondent wrote, "The contact [should be] a loving one, not exploitative. I would be concerned that the child might be misused." Along similar lines, Sarah K. Cohen, M.S.W., states, "When a nine-year-old girl acts out a desire for sexual relations, her needs tell me that she is a starving child, not hungry for genital sex . . . but love, warmth, and tenderness."

Several Associates regarded the situation as marginal and hesitated to draw firm conclusions: "Can they be said to be neurotic, retarded, or otherwise mentally impaired?" one wrote. Another commented, "I don't know the age of their partners so I can't fully judge the situation." Yet another Associate said that he had noticed, among the young, increasing numbers with multiple partners, but did not rush to an interpretation of promiscuity.

At the base of the problem, according to some respondents, are societal factors. Sex is a "commercially profitable taboo" that makes sexual activity extremely difficult for young people. The media are stuffed with sensationalism, and tasteless vulgarity is used to advertise or entertain. Sex information assures survival in the real world, which tempts and exploits the uninformed.

One respondent termed this "our instant gratification era." Sex has been overemphasized, yet sexuality is one area where the mature are expressly forbidden to teach the young. While childhood experimentation has been going on forever, we are talking about it more than we were twenty-five or thirty years ago. We are forcing people, younger and younger, to be "more grown up." As long as we, as a society, do not legitimize sexual experience among the young, we will have a "problem" with preadolescent sexual behavior.

Interest was expressed not only in societal pressures but in pressures from peers as well. "I guess my chief concern is with the peer pressures and other societal influences that force children prematurely to behave like small adults," said Richard J. Cross, M.D. (Rutgers University). Another Associate queried whether these nine-year-old girls know what they are asking for when they request contraceptives, or if they are just using words heard from their older sisters.

The major emphasis of the responses suggesting sex education was on the parents, who were urged to reassess their own values before attempting to form those of their children. Parents were urged to get involved before the tragedy occurs. The notion that parents should be educated before their children was also expressed, with education in the schools placed second because it reaches only the children. If educational pamphlets were to be used, one

respondent suggested that the mother should explain them.

The view that any child who is old enough to ask questions about sex is old enough for answers about his or her own body, was one frequently endorsed. Providing those answers by mapping a special program for nine- to twelve-year-olds was not as accepted, however. The view was expressed that many teachers, and even school counselors, are unable to deal with such materials. F. Lopez, M.D., suggested that there should be a differentiation between the information given to boys and girls, with modifications based upon the psychological and physiological development of girls.

Those who addressed themselves to the content of sex education programs agreed that such programs should not be limited to biological issues: the pros and cons of sexual intercourse involve a wider scope, with areas to be added including self-knowledge, roles, decision-making, and goals.

"Improper" sex education was blamed for several undesirable outcomes experienced by the young. As Dr. Judy Gold (East Texas State University) observed, "Nothing seems much more disastrous than a pregnant nine- to twelve-year-old." The majority of those who expressed an opinion felt that there are no birth control methods that are really appropriate for the very young, and they had strong negative feelings toward abortions for children!

There was considerable difference in opinion surrounding children's rights to make independent decisions—not so much whether or not contraceptive advice should be given as under what circumstances. Evelyn Lulis's position was that "Every individual, regardless of age, has the born right to develop sexual standards of his or her own." The opposing view was that, in situations where birth control is an issue, the parents should immediately be notified and a decision made without the involvement of the child. A middle position, that such a decision should be made between doctor and patient, was voiced, but less frequently.

Takey Crist, M.D. (University of North Carolina), contended, "Sexual activity is more dependent upon social and biological factors than on the availability of contraceptive devices." John Money, Ph.D. (Johns Hopkins University), added, "Except in a culture of sexual prohibition and punishment, it is normal and not harmful for children to engage in sexual rehearsal play." According to Dr. Ronald Moglia (Southern Illinois University), "Sexuality is as normal a body function as urination. Therefore it is impossible to prevent the expression of this function at any age." Wayne H. Davis concluded, "Fortunately, sex is one thing that won't hurt them. If we can keep them informed on birth control and VD, sex should be the least of our worries."

A number of issues were framed as research questions. "We need solid data regarding the youngest ages at which sexual intercourse is practiced," said George C. Anderhaggen (Newton Counseling Center). The motivational factors behind early sexual involvement were considered to be important, and the factor of risk-taking behavior was considered to be crucial by Mark D. Hiller (University of Pittsburgh). Another observation was that "Sexual intercourse is one of the nicest ways of having fun but it's important to know if these children are really having fun. Furthermore, nobody seems to know just what it is that children want to know." There would appear to be a need to collect evidence on the consequences of sexual intercourse for the young child, her family, and society.

Some of the respondents suggested that we should be working toward finding more appropriate outlets for the energies of these young girls. In the words of Arthur Howard, M.D., "I am for a better social and cultural life for teenagers. They should be so busy, mentally, physically, and socially, that they have little time for 'getting into trouble.'"

### Discussion

In the intervening year, national attention has suddenly become focused on the pregnancies in preadolescents—30,000 annually in the under-fifteen age group, and rising. And this group feeds into the adolescent group (ages fifteen to nineteen) in which there are already one million pregnancies yearly—almost 20,000 per week—or one in every ten girls in the age group.

But, then, what are the characteristics of the nine out of ten girls in this age group who do not become pregnant? Are they practicing contraception (the evidence is that comparatively few do), infertile (adolescent infertility is probably a thing of the past in those nations with menarche at age twelve), not exactly "interested" (unlikely today), governed by religious scruples (church-going has been shown to correlate with less sexual activity), or just plain lucky (a girl who might be lucky at age sixteen might luck out the following year!)? One thing they are: just plain ignorant and willfully kept so (and therefore at risk), by the "average standards of the average citizens in their communities"—including their own parents.

What hope is there, then, for the preadolescents who were the subjects of our inquiry, and who constitute yearly increments of nonimmunized children joining the ranks of the adolescents exposed to pregnancy? Obviously neither SIECUS nor those Associates who responded have an answer, but the search must go on.

## DO YOU KNOW THAT...

### PTA Sex Education Project

For the past three years the National Parent-Teacher Association (NPTA) has conducted pilot projects in health education funded by the Bureau of Health Education, Center for Disease Control, DHEW. Initially beginning with various communities in California, this year's contract provides for similar health education awareness projects in six pilot states: Arkansas, California, Colorado, Georgia, Indiana, and Pennsylvania.

In response to the increased nationwide recognition being given to the need for sex education, the next phase of the NPTA project will focus on human sexuality, within its broader context as a family health issue. A national planning group, representative of agencies prominent in family health concerns, has been appointed to examine the major resources available to assist schools and communities in planning for the incorporation of sex education into comprehensive health education programs, and to make appropriate recommendations. Project planners note that comprehensive health education should address the social-emotional, intellectual, and physical needs of individuals throughout their lives.

# AUDIO-VISUAL REVIEWS

**Behavioral Treatment of Sexual Dysfunction.** One-hour audiotape. Joseph LoPiccolo, Ph.D., Dept. of Psychiatry and Behavioral Research, State University of New York School of Medicine, Stony Brook, N.Y.

*Reviewed by Ellen M. Berman, M.D., Director of Training, Marriage Council of Philadelphia; and Assistant Professor of Psychiatry, University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine, Philadelphia, Pa.*

This tape is part of Volume II of the Audio Journal series, *Behavior Therapy: Techniques, Principles and Patient Aids* (Cyril M. Franks, Ph.D., editor). As such, its purpose is a general overview of the theory and therapy of sexual dysfunctions from a behavioral point of view. The tape includes an introduction to the behavioral theory of sexual dysfunction, plus a description of, and treatment techniques for, male/female sexual dysfunction.

Side I contrasts the traditional analytic "sex as symptom of serious problems" approach with the more current "sex as problem requiring direct treatment" approach. Dr. LoPiccolo points out that current treatment methods are complex and multifaceted packages, and that sometimes it is not obvious which mechanisms are responsible for change.

He sees the common elements in the direct-treatment package as:

1. Mutual responsibility of both parties for the dysfunction;
  2. information and sex education;
  3. producing change in attitudes about sex;
  4. elimination of performance anxiety;
  5. increasing communication and effectiveness of sexual techniques;
  6. changing a destructive lifestyle and sex role by the therapist's active direction;
  7. prescribing changes in behavior—usually sensate focus exercises.
- All of these, not only the exercises,

are seen as crucial to the direct approach.

Side II describes specific treatment methods for premature ejaculation, erectile failure, ejaculatory incompetence, orgasmic dysfunction, and vaginismus. Dr. LoPiccolo also comments on some ethical problems involved in the rapidly growing field of sex therapy.

The material is covered using a behavioral model and includes the "sensate focus" exercises first described by Masters and Johnson. Much attention is given to masturbation techniques used prior to, or in conjunction with, sensate focus exercises. Many helpful suggestions are given regarding the type and timing of such exercises.

Treatment techniques are described in some detail, although no role-play or patient vignettes are used. A good bibliography is provided.

There are a few problems with this tape from this reviewer's point of view. (1) There is no discussion of the more integrative approaches to sex therapy (such as Helen Kaplan's). Many behaviorists do not agree with these techniques, but in view of their widespread influence I would have welcomed some comments. (2) Lack of desire, often a major problem in treatment and a new category in the forthcoming DSM-III, is not discussed as a separate entity. (3) A minor but annoying point is that the tape does not have a numbered code so that you can easily locate a particular section of tape.

For this reviewer, the question always arises with audiotapes not containing patient-therapist vignettes—is an hour spent with this tape more useful than the same hour spent with a textbook? The information in this tape is undoubtedly useful, and is also available elsewhere in written form. Whether one reads or listens depends on one's learning style.

## Correction

The May 1977 *SIECUS Report* contained on page 14 a review by Dr. Julia Heiman of the series of 55-minute audiotapes produced and distributed by Jeffery Norton Publishers, and made from the tapes of an original television series on human sexuality produced by Milton Diamond, Ph.D., of the University of Hawaii Medical School, which was successfully aired in Hawaii on educational television.

The number of tapes in the series was incorrectly listed in the review as fifteen; there are thirty tapes in the series. Individual tapes are priced at \$13.70, and all thirty are available for \$350.

Our apologies to Dr. Diamond and Jeffery Norton Publishers for this error.

## FROM THE SIECUS CATALOG

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### SEX, LOVE AND INTIMACY—WHOSE LIFE STYLE?

Psychiatrist Roy W. Menninger, M.D. discusses *Intimacy: Definitions and Distortions*. Sociologist Isao Fujimoto, Ph.D. approaches the topic from the possible points of view of the Mainstream, Woodstock, and Third World Nations. SIECUS Executive Director Mary S. Calderone, M.D. discusses the various meanings of love, sex and intimacy and the special intimations of these to aging as a lifestyle in itself.

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### SEX EDUCATION AND FAMILY LIFE FOR VISUALLY HANDICAPPED CHILDREN AND YOUTH:

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**Gittelsohn, Catholic Thought, Continued from page 1**

thors accurately describe as follows: "It was very much a basic assumption of Catholic moral tradition that sexual intercourse is of itself an evil that can be 'excused' only on the basis of the benefits accruing to marriage, the first and foremost of those benefits being the procreation of children."

Fr. Kosnik and his associates depart from this gloomy evaluation of sex in two substantive ways. First, picking up where Vatican II left off, they assert that the role of sex in generating and expressing love is at least as great as its procreative function. "We think it appropriate . . . to broaden the traditional formulation of the purpose of sexuality from *procreative and unitive to creative and integrative*" (italics in the original). Second, they move from a narrow, purely biological estimate of each sexual expression as an act in and of itself to a broader contextual level of evaluation: "The genuine moral meaning of particular individual acts is most accurately discerned not solely from an abstract analysis of the biology of the act but necessarily including the circumstances as well as intention that surround the action."

Coming from so respectable and authentic a source, this is pretty heady stuff! It leads to equally exciting and radical conclusions of specific acts of sexual expression. On masturbation, homosexuality, birth control, extramarital intercourse—even on oral sex—sentences could be quoted which sound as if they had been lifted from the literature of SIECUS! Two small samples of the spirit which suffuses all these specific matters will have to suffice. "The importance of the erotic element, that is, instinctual desire for pleasure and gratification deserves to be affirmed and encouraged. Human sexual expression is meant to be enjoyed without feelings of guilt or remorse." And, speaking of "the possibilities that human sexuality offers: The repression, submersion, or denial of these possibilities is as much a deviation from virtue as is the mindless pursuit of sensual pleasure as the ultimate goal of life."

How does a knowledgeable Jew react to these remarkable new directions in Catholic thought? On several levels. First, it is most encouraging to find here a Christian recognition of the fact that Hebrew scripture is more realistic and wholesome in its acceptance of sexuality than were the church fathers. I am not sure that the Kosnik group is justified in excusing the restrictive views of the early church as the almost inevitable consequence of surrounding cultural factors; after all, Judaism in the postbiblical period was exposed to the same environmental influences without yielding to the view that sex is at best a necessary evil. I have a feeling, moreover, that in their understandable desire to "legitimize" their broader view within the Christian tradition, they may have stretched several truths. In the light of what we know about Augustine, for example, it is difficult to agree that "There can be no doubt but that the doctrine of marriage was furthered through St. Augustine." Similarly, one wonders whether the report is warranted in extrapolating from the general support of interpersonal and divine love by Jesus to claim that explicit sexual love can also be grounded in his teachings.

What pleases a Jewish observer particularly is the obvious movement of at least these pioneers in Catholic thought toward what has always characterized the mainstream Jewish point of view. [For a fuller exposition of Jewish views on sex, see Roland B. Gittelsohn, *Consecrated Unto Me* (1965), *My Beloved Is Mine* (1969), or *Love, Sex and Marriage—A Jewish*

*View* (1976), all published by the Union of American Hebrew Congregations.] Judaism has never emphasized the procreative function of intercourse at the expense of its proper role in love, nor has it ever looked upon sex as being inherently evil. Jews have little to learn from the Kosnik study, beyond feeling gratified that their own insights on human sexuality are at least being approached by a tradition which has long opposed them.

For the most part *Human Sexuality* is eminently fair in its treatment of the biblical Jewish view on sex. One glaring exception is the statement: "The possibility of easy divorce made mockery of personal love and fidelity and encouraged Jewish men to regard women, even their wives, as inferior beings to be used at will and discarded as they saw fit." This is grossly untrue! While the Jewish legal provisions for divorce leave much to be desired, and the Jewish attitude toward women was certainly not always what we might wish it to be, divorce was never easy and could be attained only if there were proper grounds for it and the rights of the wife being divorced had been protected. Never did Jews or Judaism look upon women as inferior beings, to be used or discarded at will.

The ramifications of this study go far beyond even its exciting conclusions about sex. It accepts the basically Jewish view that "human nature is essentially good." (What happens, then, to the doctrine of Original Sin?) It agrees with modern, liberal Judaism (certainly not with the Orthodox attitude) that "The teaching of the Bible must be seen against the background of its time, against the cultural and sociological conditions that characterize its era. The Bible is an historical document bearing the limitations of all historical records." Even more breath-taking and amazing for a Catholic treatise, it affirms that "Critical New Testament scholarship has come to recognize that it cannot produce a biography of Jesus or even in many instances guarantee his exact words."

How long can a church which has moved to these conclusions remain Catholic as we and it have understood that tradition? There can be little doubt that this question has bothered the authoritative spokesmen of the church at least as much as this book's views on sex. For myself, I am profoundly convinced that only thus can Catholicism or any other religious tradition hope to survive. Fr. Kosnik and his colleagues have gone much beyond a reluctant acceptance of the future; they are determined, God bless them, to be among its active participants. **A, PR**

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**Nelson, Catholic Thought, Continued from page 1**

responsible decisions concerning their own sexual behavior in light of certain principles and values, and instead has relied upon hierarchical declarations; (6) it has emphasized the importance of the continuity of Catholic moral tradition over its development and change; (7) it has downplayed (and often simply ignored) current sexual research and empirical data as having significance for the church's moral position; (8) it has held the procreative norm to be essential in all sexual acts; and, (9) it has been largely negative in regard to the value of sexual pleasure.

On every one of these counts, the present volume challenges and departs from the traditional and official Catholic posture. That it does so with considerable graciousness and diplomatic skills testifies both to the authors'

commitment to their church and to their political astuteness. In the few short months since its publication (and even before official release) the report has come under heavy attack from Catholic conservatives. But the vigorous debate is much needed, and this theologically responsible, empirically informed, courageous book is a fresh and invigorating breeze.

The Introduction sets forth a fundamental theme: that human sexuality must be viewed within the context of the whole person and the whole of human life, and, for Christians, within the context of a biblical view of selfhood. Chapter I deals with the biblical materials themselves. Using the best tools of contemporary scholarship, the authors reject the notion that there are absolute and eternally valid biblical prescriptions regarding sex. Rather, the bible presents us with a plurality of historically conditioned sex judgments. However, of greater importance by far, it provides certain fundamental themes of lasting validity for sexual judgments—the love of God, the ideal of fidelity, the goodness of sex, and the dimensions of personhood and community which should inform all decisions.

Chapter II is a review of the church's historical tradition on sex. The authors are direct in their critique of the dualisms which have led to negative, juridical, and act-centered sexual ethics. But they emphasize the positive wherever possible, particularly stressing that both Vatican II and the 1975 "Declaration on Certain Questions Concerning Sexual Ethics" actually did prepare the way for a more positive and holistic approach to sexuality, even if these documents did not consistently apply that approach. The authors of the present book want to affirm continuity in the church's moral traditions, but they are even more concerned about development, especially the development toward "the personalist principle" in sex ethics.

The deductive, antiempirical methodology of the past is countered by Chapter III's positive approach to empirical data. Thus far, it is argued, empirical research has not definitely established either the harm or the harmlessness of major forms of nonmarried genital sex, but particular research results ought to inform all sex ethics guidelines.

The authors' constructive proposal for a theological ethics of sexuality comes in Chapter IV. If, they argue, sexuality is "a pervasive and constitutive factor in the structure of human existence," then "wholesome human sexuality is that which fosters a *creative growth toward integration*." This marks a change from the traditional Catholic formulation of the primary procreative principle and the secondary unitive principle to the co-equal principles of creativity and integration. To flesh out the content of these principles, the authors propose seven values as particularly significant in appropriate sex behavior: it will be self-liberating, other enriching, honest, faithful, socially responsible, life-serving, and joyous. Beyond these values, it is appropriate that the Christian community formulate more specific norms and guidelines regarding which particular expressions of sexuality have been proven generally conducive to or destructive of such creativity and integration, but these must be seen as guidelines admitting of possible exception and not as universal moral absolutes.

Over half of the book is contained in Chapter V, "Pastoral Guidelines for Human Sexuality." Herein most of the possible sex expressions, marital and nonmarital, heterosexual and homosexual, are discussed with a fine integration of

scriptural insights, current research data, an evaluation of differing possible ethical approaches to the expression in question, and a set of suggestions for pastors in counseling and educating their parishioners. Several sections deserve special mention. The section on contraception is a lucid, cogent argument for the moral viability of artificial contraception and, while its conclusions depart dramatically from the official Catholic position, its reasoning shows the continuity of this logic with Vatican II principles. Similarly, the treatment of sterilization opens this up as a moral possibility. In the absence of clear biblical teaching on premarital intercourse, and sensitive to current research on the subject, the authors refuse to take a legalistic line and counsel that sexual expression must be gauged so that it is commensurate with the depth and commitment of the relationship. The excellent and detailed section on homosexuality eschews sickness and sin diagnoses, argues for a single standard of sexual morality regardless of affectional preference, and urges the full participation of gay people in the life of the church (though "homosexual marriage" is not endorsed). A number of other sexual possibilities are also treated with considerable psychological insight and moral sensitivity.

This fine book is not without its limitations. The authors are aware of some of them. For example, they have consciously steered a middle course between producing a technical book for the professional theologian and a highly practical book for pastoral guidance. It contains both elements but lacks some of the details that either side might like to have.

**FROM THE SIECUS CATALOG**

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**SEXUALITY AND HUMAN VALUES:**

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The book is clearly Roman Catholic in orientation. While there is great value here for others, those members of different religious communions will find much of the argumentation concerning contraception, sterilization, celibacy, artificial insemination, and masturbation reflecting difficulties with these subjects which have been more peculiar to the Catholic tradition.

In spite of the book's boldness at many points, in my judgment the authors are unduly cautious at others. Several examples will suffice. Oral-genital sex deserves a stronger affirmation than it receives. Anal intercourse for heterosexual couples still appears to be unmentionable. The discussion of masturbation, while considerably more positive than traditional Catholic teaching, still has "the lesser of the evils" sound to it. Sterilization is regarded as morally permissible under certain conditions, but the authors stop short of acknowledging that at times a vasectomy or a tubal ligation might well be a positive act of Christian responsibility. At points such as these, the authors' political sensitivities regarding conservative backlash may have created some reticence, but the logic of their basic orientation to sexuality should have led to stronger statements than we actually find.

The book is largely limited to the sexual issues confronting the able and relatively "youthful." Only very brief mention is made of the mentally retarded and physically handicapped, and virtually no attention is given to the sexuality of the aging and of the terminally ill.

Nevertheless, all of the above "limitations" are understandable within the scope possible in a book such as this. There is one other—and very basic—limitation, however, which characterizes not only this volume but the vast majority of books on religion and sexuality. It is essentially one-directional. It deals primarily with the question "What does our religious faith say about how we should live our sexual lives?" It does not really tackle the other direction: "What does our experience as sexual human beings say about the way in which we understand the basic realities of life?" Had the latter question been asked with as much diligence as the former, the pervasive influence of the two major dualisms—sexism (man-over-woman) and spiritualism

(mind-over-body)—on the ways in which we perceive both sexual and "nonsexual" questions would have been more clearly recognized.

For example, the otherwise excellent treatment of the issue of homosexuality fails to raise one of the most basic questions of all: How can we account for the great fear, the homophobia, which, ignoring available facts, persists in distorting the understanding of this issue? And that question cannot be answered, in my opinion, without taking much more seriously the male sexism which pervades so much of our perceptions of identity and values. Or, what of the sexual dimensions of the church's liturgy, or our relationship to God, of the ecological problem and our relationship to the earth, of militarism and social violence? In one sense it can be countered that such considerations as these lie far beyond the scope of such a book. In another sense, however, if we are going to take seriously the authors' contention that sexuality is fundamental to personality and to the way that people perceive themselves and relate to their surroundings, then we shall at least have to recognize that these other kinds of questions are very much sex-related and should be of vital concern to the church. No book needs to attempt everything, but if we are going to define human sexuality (and rightly so) as much more encompassing than genital expression, then we ought at least recognize where that definition will lead us.

Even so, this volume is immensely important and constructive. I think its greatest importance will be within the Roman Catholic church itself, where it is charting some very significant new directions. Its long-range effect upon the Catholic hierarchy is difficult for a Protestant to guess at, but such obviously competent scholarship and carefully balanced reasoning cannot be utterly ignored in the ongoing development of that communion's moral tradition. Outside of the Catholic church, the volume will predictably be attacked by biblical literalists and social conservatives. But it will be welcomed and found highly useful by those others who find its positive orientation to human sexuality religiously and humanly compelling, and who find its judicious dialogue between contemporary sex research and Judeo-Christian values utterly necessary. **A, PR**

**SEOUS** REPORT

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