

## "HONK! IF YOU MASTURBATE!"

by Diane B. Brashear, Ph.D.\*

*The May 1974 issue of the SIECUS Report included ten important position statements adopted by the SIECUS Board of Directors. This article by SIECUS Board member, Diane B. Brashear, expands on the statement concerning masturbation, which reads as follows:*

*It is the position of SIECUS that:*

*Sexual self-pleasuring, or masturbation, is a natural part of sexual behavior for individuals of all ages.*

*It can help to develop a sense of the body as belonging to the self, and an affirmative attitude toward the body as a legitimate source of enjoyment.*

*It can also help in the release of tension in a way harmless to the self and to others, and provide an intense experience of the self as preparation for experiencing another.*

*Masturbation, and the fantasies that frequently accompany it, can be important aids in maintaining or restoring the image of one's self as a fully functioning human being.*

As infants discover the joy of their bodies, they learn the pleasure and positive experience in touching their fingers, toes, and genitals. Parents delight in their child's skill in labeling body parts correctly. "Where's your eye? Your nose?" is a favorite parent-child game which aids the child's cognitive development as well as communicating positive value about the named body parts. The pleasure in discovering ourselves is as natural to our development as eating and sleeping. But, how many parents say, "Where's your penis? Your vagina? Vulva? Clitoris? Testes?" Parents do not take pride in their child's discovery of his or her genitals. Instead they indicate through games and non-verbal cues that these unnamed parts should remain unnamed and unused, forgetting that inevitably they will be covertly discovered.

The word masturbation, as well as definition about this behavior, is confusing. Some prefer that the term be restricted to self-stimulation purposefully directed to sexual arousal and orgasm. Others suggest that masturbation involves a variety of sexual behaviors, and argue that autoeroticism which includes dreams, fantasies and physical self-stimulation may more accurately reflect human experience. Nevertheless,

masturbation and whatever it connotes has historically been and currently is, a topic of great concern. Most professional literature appears to be preoccupied with symptoms and problems related to masturbation. Havelock Ellis was known to have written, "There is no end to the list of real and supposed symptoms as a result of masturbation," an ambivalence still shared by many. Today studies and written material about masturbation support the theme "masturbation is normal." It does seem, however, that few sources, with the exception of some popular "how to do it" books ever say that masturbation is good. Is it too farfetched to suggest that mothers be helped to feel free to say to their children, "Masturbation is a good way of enjoying your body" in a way similar to getting a good night's sleep makes you feel fine the next day.

Masturbation can be important, helpful, comforting and good training to prepare an individual for later, more involved sexual, other-directed response. And yet, sex therapists note that negative attitudes formed in childhood about masturbation can be related to turned off adults who have generalized negative feelings about all sexual expression. The absence of masturbation is a frequent finding in histories of women with orgasmic difficulties. "Giving permission" — a common theme in today's sex counseling — often is gained by recommending and teaching masturbation to sexually dysfunctional adults. What better way to learn what pleasures us than ourselves, to bring about and experience our sexual feelings and responses without risking feelings of having to perform to outer imposed norms or to the projected needs of a partner, and free of the fear of reprisal or defeat.

Masturbation is often viewed defensively as substitute behavior for something "better." However, no studies have shown that people who are free of handicaps are likely to stay with exclusive masturbation, especially when a partner is available. "I have to masturbate" can also sometimes be an angry accusation to an unsatisfactory partner. The concept that self-pleasure can of itself be acceptable and positive seems wanting. Giving to oneself is difficult for many individuals. We work so others can be proud, so others can appreciate, enjoy. Self-denial, self-discipline is a virtue. To enjoy oneself, "to give to me" and to play on behalf of oneself does not come easily to adults well socialized to our work ethic — acceptable for children, yes, but not for responsible grown-ups! This may be why it is easier to excuse masturba-

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# SPEAKING OUT

## THOSE IMMORAL MORALITY LAWS

*SIECUS Position: Sex Education, at any age, cannot be effective as long as it occurs in a society which, in many of its aspects, inhibits rational assessment of sexuality as a central force in human behavior. SIECUS' role is to identify and publicize social policies which perpetuate unhealthy attitudes about sexuality and foster alienation from self and others.*

At least since the advent of the Kinsey reports, the problem of anachronistic laws regulating non-victimizing, sexually motivated behavior has been an ethical "American Dilemma." For most people these laws are viewed with feelings ranging from amusement to embarrassed indifference, but their very existence constitutes a continued affront to our much extolled rights of privacy and personal freedom, and they have lasted well into our era because of the hidden or sporadic nature of the personal victimizations they have caused.

The argument — originally seen as the right of the State to control behavior inimical to its conventional standards versus the right of individual freedom over essentially private conduct — can hardly be said to have disappeared in the light of the 1973 Supreme Court pornography decisions. An interesting offshoot of the days when the issue still seemed fresh — the attempt to examine scientifically the effects of pornography — has concluded with disengagement. Former President Nixon's rejection of the report of the Commission on Obscenity and Pornography was indicative of the avoidance of any dialogue between the scientist and the legislator over sexual issues. Since most of the objective evidence is convincing but stale with age, the more or less detached viewers are bored. Those with a strong need to enunciate their positions at this time have, in the main, a personal stake, the laws representing for them either continued oppression or a witness for morality. Thus the argument has not disappeared but has shifted from the plane of science to the jungles of ideology.

Neither the legal-philosophical joustings nor the attempts to develop evidence through research can be abandoned. Neither, unfortunately, can we place much hope in them. Ideological positions change very slowly and those who speak with great emotion are unlikely to convince others to change their own convictions. The possibilities for powerful change efforts seem to lie on two other fronts in which we have had only rather muted interests to this time. We speak here of the courts and the voting public.

One of the most significant developments over the recent years has been in the legal definition of a right of privacy. The sexual field needs a program for expanding this newly emerging right and for fighting the horrendous local decisions which so often pass unchallenged. A program similar to that which NAACP has mounted for the legal rights of blacks over the past thirty years would seem to be eminently required.

More specifically, we must accentuate the drive to bring sexual freedom, knowledge, personal enlightenment and devel-

opment to the great masses of "ordinary" people, the matrons from the suburbs, the businessmen who are not always so tired, and the "blue collar" people who are moving towards the same sexual value positions as those from higher educational backgrounds. They represent the political clout that can ease very real legislator fears that "a vote for sexual freedom can be a ticket to political oblivion." More than that, it is they who can raise the level of enlightened general discussion from the strangely preserved Victorianism which still characterizes and stifles so much of the argument.

The fight for the allegiance of this group of people is not a question of radical politics. They will not have been won over when the pink flag waves over the barricades. For these "ordinary people" we have a carrot and a stick and we had better learn to use them.

The stick is in the reality that these laws can hurt them. In a world where young men and women are hitchhiking from coast to coast one day, in upper class homes on the next, that young and sex-seeking transient may be my child or theirs. Alone, without support of family and community, the insane roulette that those laws represent for the powerless may result in arrest and life-long labeling. They have another effect. They disenfranchise the sexual experimenter from the protection of the police. Because of this a youngster who, possibly quite innocently, became involved in a Houston pot party with homosexual overtones back in 1972, would not have

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# DO YOU KNOW THAT . . .

## Training and Workshop Opportunities —Fall and Winter

**National Sex Forum** announces a series of two-day basic courses in human sexuality during November, December and January. Cost \$50. Write to: National Sex Forum, 540 Powell St., San Francisco, CA 94108, for dates and registration forms, or call (415) 989-6176.

**Midwest Association for the Study of Human Sexuality** announces a variety of workshops this fall and winter on such subjects as bisexual behavior, human sexuality, physically handicapped, and venereal disease. For dates and registration information write to: MASHS, 100 E. Ohio St., Chicago, IL 60611, or call (312) 467-1290.

**Center for Marital and Sexual Studies** is conducting two-day seminars for professionals on the treatment of sexual dysfunction and the use of films for sex education and therapy in several cities this fall. Also in-residence training programs for professionals of one week, two weeks, and six weeks duration at the Center's headquarters in Long Beach, CA. For schedules and registration information write: Center for Marital and Sexual Studies, 5199 East Pacific Coast Hwy, Long Beach, CA 90804, or phone (213) 597-4425.

**University of Alabama, Division of Continuing Education** will sponsor a three-day symposium, "Rape — Research, Action, Prevention" on January 20-22, 1975. For details write: Ms. Marcia J. Walker, Coordinator, Rape Research Group, Center for Correctional Psychology, Box 2968, University, Alabama 35486. Phone: (205) 348-5083.

## Major Publisher Will Bar Sexism in Nonfiction

McGraw-Hill, one of the largest publishing companies in the world, will attempt to eliminate sexual stereotyping from its non-fiction works. According to Dan Lacy, a senior vice president, "Especially in books that have an educational impact, we want to reflect the changing contemporary attitude about women and the equalization of the sexes, and give to young people a keen awareness of the dignity of the opposite sex." Responding to feminists' criticism of sexual stereotyping in its nonfiction publications such as textbooks, trade journals, children's books and educational materials, the company established a committee that has been working for over a year to develop very specific guidelines for "fair, accurate and balanced treatment of both sexes." To be avoided are such references to women as "the fair sex," "the better half," "sweet young thing," as well as sexual innuendos and

jokes made at the expense of women or, for that matter, of either sex.

In instructional materials the guidelines suggest that both men and women be shown sharing household duties, and women in occupational roles should not be restricted to traditional sex-typed careers. The guidelines will be distributed to all McGraw-Hill's authors and editorial staff and will be implemented in 1975 and future nonfiction publications of the company.

## Post Graduate Medical Programs are Available

Loyola University (Chicago) has begun a training program in the treatment of sexual dysfunction. The program, open to non-M.D. co-therapists as well as to physicians, follows a dual-sex therapy team approach.

There are four rotations planned so far. One began July 12, 1974, the next three will begin October 4, 1974, January 10, 1975, and April 4, 1975. Each rotation is ten weeks long.

Write to Domeena Renshaw, M.D. for more information. Director, Sexual Dysfunction Clinic, Loyola University, Department of Psychiatry, 2160 South First Avenue, Maywood, Illinois 60153.

Also, the Hawaii Section of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, in association with the University of Hawaii School of Medicine, is holding a series of eight four day workshops for physicians. The programs aim at teaching techniques to deal with the sexually troubled patient who may not require psychiatric care. Video cassettes, films, audio cassettes, case study, personal instruction, and text materials will all be used. Registration will be limited. Cost will be \$200. For additional information write Ronald J. Pion, M.D., 1319 Punahou Street, Honolulu, Hawaii 96814.

## New Journal on Marriage and Family Counseling

American Association of Marriage and Family Counselors have announced the publication of a new clinical journal for professionals beginning in January 1975. The *Journal of Marriage and Family Counseling* will publish articles on clinical practice, research and theory in marriage and family counseling and therapy. Editor of the new journal is William C. Nichols, Ed.D. Information about manuscripts should be sent to him at Sandels Bldg. Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL 32306. Subscriptions to the quarterly publication are \$15 a year, for institutions, \$25. To subscribe write to AAMFC, 225 Yale Ave., Claremont, CA 91711.

# WHERE THE ACTION IS

## SIECUS RESEARCH AWARD WINNERS

David John Ogren, Ph.D. is the recipient of the 1974 SIECUS Research Award for his doctoral dissertation study, "Sexual Guilt, Behavior, Attitudes, and Information," conducted in the Department of Psychology, University of Houston, Texas. He is presently an associate in the Clinical Psychology Center, a private counseling clinic in Houston.

Dr. Ogren's investigation of the relationship between sexual guilt and sexual attitudes, behavior and accurate sexual information, has led him to conclude that, "sexual guilt, which seems to be based at least in part on misinformation and distortions, serves to interfere with the acquisition of accurate sex information, both of which later interfere with a person's overall sexual adjustment. It must also be noted that those persons who would most need an adequate sex education, namely, people whose early education was based upon scientifically unsound sexual myths and guilt-ridden notions, are the very ones who will be most closed to sex education and may even oppose it vigorously."

Honorable mention in the SIECUS Research Award program goes to Sonya Rae Iverson, Ph.D. for her doctoral dissertation study, "Sex Education and Adolescent Attitudes," conducted at the Institute of Child Study, University of Maryland. Her study investigated the effects of the pro-

gram *About Your Sexuality*, an adolescent sex education course developed by the Unitarian-Universalist Association, on sexual attitudes, sex role stereotyping, ability to live comfortably with ambiguity, and tolerance of others unlike oneself. Also included in her study was the influence of parental modeling on the sexual attitudes of adolescents.

Dr. Iverson, who is currently an assistant professor in the School of Nursing at the University of Maryland, undertook this study when she became involved as a volunteer teacher of the *About Your Sexuality* course and discovered the dearth of evaluative research in sex education.

The SIECUS Research Award program was established in 1973 to recognize significant research that contributes to the field of sex and family life education. SIECUS Board member, Dr. Alan Bell, who is senior research psychologist at the Institute of Sex Research, Indiana University, served as chairman of the judging.

Following is an abstract of Dr. Ogren's research. An abstract of Dr. Iverson's research will appear in a future issue of the SIECUS Report. SIECUS congratulates these two researchers and the others who submitted papers, for the excellence of these needed contributions to our knowledge of sexuality. (See list of entries, page 13.)

### *Abstract of Sexual Guilt, Behavior, Attitudes and Information*

by David John Ogren, Ph.D.

The primary purpose of this study was to determine whether or not sexual guilt, when conceptualized as an avoidant type of motivation, is significantly related to sexual behavior, attitudes, and fund of accurate sexual information.

Subjects were 207 college students (90 male, 116 female, 1 unknown) enrolled in a marriage, family and sex education course at the University of Houston. Subjects anonymously completed a 251-item questionnaire which included the McCary Sex Information Test, the Mosher 'G' Inventory to assess sexual guilt, a number of questions concerning attitudes toward a wide variety of sexual practices and standards, questions concerning behavior actually engaged in, and a number of items regarding background information. All attitudinal items and items dealing with reasons for restricting premarital coitus were factor analyzed, with seven of nine extracted attitude factors being retained as variables, and all three restriction factors being retained.

Sexual guilt was found to be negatively related to the overall level of sexual activity, frequency of coitus in the previous six months, age of first intercourse, number of premarital partners, accumulative incidence and frequency of

masturbation, frequency of oral-genital stimulation, petting to orgasms on dates, and engaging in mutual oral-genital stimulation on dates.

Higher sexual guilt was also negatively related to a positive response to erotic or pornographic material, using contraceptives, frequency of extramarital experiences, the frequency of homosexual experiences, and directly related to experiencing problems with sex in marriage.

Multiple regression analysis found response to pornography, age at first intercourse, and sex problems in marriage to be significantly related to guilt and to account for at least one per cent of the variance of sexual guilt.

Higher sexual guilt was found to be significantly related to being female, having higher past and present interest in religion, attending church more frequently than average, having a less intimate relationship with one's dating partner, but was not related to age, marital status, family stability, or regret over past premarital coitus. Only present religious interest was found to account for at least one per cent of the variance of sexual guilt in a multiple regression analysis of variance.

Higher sexual guilt was positively related to restricting premarital coitus out of the belief that premarital intercourse will damage one's self-image. High sexual guilt was also positively related to a conservative position on six of the seven attitude factors: non-marital sex, impersonal-personal sex,

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# BOOK REVIEWS

**The New Sex Therapy**, Helen Singer Kaplan. New York: Brunner/Mazel, 1974. (544 pages; \$17.50).

Reviewed by Harold I. Lief, M.D.

In *Human Sexual Inadequacy*, Masters and Johnson advocate a specific method of behavior modification for patients with sexual dysfunctions such as orgasmic inadequacy, premature ejaculation, and impotence. Their method of treatment is firmly anchored in marriage counseling in which the relationship between the couple is the focus of attention. If their suggestions for more effective sexual arousal are resisted, perhaps even sabotaged, by one or both partners, they turn their attention to the couple's *relationship resistance*. By diminishing the resistance to the specific treatment (one typical example of which is the person who cannot accept suggestions from his spouse because he misperceives these as commands from a dominating partner), the St. Louis team usually obtains acceptance of their sexual re-education techniques that form the substance of their method.

Many of us who are both marital and sex therapists have wondered who would come along to describe the variety of approaches to these marital-sexual problems in which, for example, couple-therapy might be used at first, to clear the way for sexual re-education or, if intrapsychic causes of sexual dysfunction predominate, would employ the appropriate use of individual psychotherapy in conjunction with marital-sexual therapy. We no longer have to wait. Helen Kaplan has written a marvelous book on sex therapy, incorporating the pioneering methods of Masters and Johnson and integrating them with marital and individual psychotherapy. As she states, instead of relying "primarily on sex education and counseling and the prescription of erotic tasks to advance

their therapeutic objectives . . . in sharp contrast my own psychodynamically oriented approach conceptualizes sex therapy as a form of psychotherapy" (p. 197).

A major advance of Masters and Johnson has been to use tasks assigned to be carried out in the privacy of the couple's own bedroom, rather than to rely entirely on the emotional and cognitive experiences encountered in the therapist's office. A form of "direct psychotherapy" had been advocated in years past by Herzberg, by Stevenson, and by others in which tasks assigned outside the office were a primary focus of treatment. However, direct behavioral prescriptions were regarded by most psychotherapists as "manipulating" the patient, and hence a violation of psychoanalytic canons; consequently this form of treatment tended to be dismissed without serious consideration. Unfortunately, psychotherapy of the individual patient has helped only a minority of patients applying for relief of disabling sexual dysfunctions. Couple-therapy, better suited to deal with the relationships between partners, has a better chance of succeeding, but has needed a method of translating what was learned in the therapist's office into actual life-situations in an undemanding, relatively anxiety-free atmosphere. Masters and Johnson provided a method that could accomplish this. An unfinished task was the integration of these techniques.

Kaplan's own words tell the story: "The exclusive reliance on the office session is in sharp contrast to the new approach. In sex therapy, the experiences suggested by the therapist and conducted by the patient and his partner while they are alone together are considered to be a vital factor and, indeed, an essential change-producing agent of the therapeutic procedure. The rational use of these therapeutic experiences amplifies the power of psychotherapy enormously.

"However, dynamically oriented sex therapists do not rely exclusively on prescribed sexual interactions. Rather, we employ an *integrated combination* of sexual experiences in psychotherapy. This combination constitutes the main innovation of sex therapy and holds the secret of its power. Psychotherapeutic intervention alone, both individual and conjoint, helps sexual problems to some extent. Highly stimulating and concomitantly reassuring sexual experiences probably can help some persons overcome sexual difficulties. However, the judicious combination of prescribed sexual interactions between the sexual partners which are systematically structured to relieve specific sexual difficulties, employed synergistically together with psychotherapeutic sessions which are designed to modify the unconscious intrapsychic and transactional impediments to sexual functioning and to create a free and secure sexual system between the partners, is the most effective and far-reaching approach to the treatment of sexual difficulties as yet devised and constitutes a major advance in the behavioral sciences" (p. 193).

In keeping with this integration, Kaplan analyzes three categories of causes of sexual dysfunctions, namely, the immediate, the intrapsychic, and the relationship or dyadic causes. The immediate causes are: 1. Failure to engage in effective sexual behavior, which includes sexual ignorance and unconscious avoidance of good sex; 2. Sexual anxiety, which includes fear of failure, demand for performance, and the excessive need to please the partner, or fear of the partner's rejection; 3. Perceptual and intellectual defenses against erotic feelings, the primary form of which is "spectatoring," or the excessive use of one's "observing self"; 4. Failure to communicate effectively.

In thinking about this list of immediate causes, one is immediately aware of Kaplan's debt to Masters and

Johnson, for all of these are mentioned in *Human Sexual Inadequacy*. In *The New Sex Therapy*, however, Kaplan elaborates and expands these points. And so it is with the rest of the book. There is an expansive discussion of the issues, amply illustrated by 39 case-histories which bring home to the reader in great clarity Kaplan's concepts of therapeutic techniques.

Biology and medicine are not neglected. In the early part of her book the author includes chapters on anatomy and physiology of the sexual response, the brain and sex, hormones and sex, the effect of illness on sexuality, the effects of drugs on sexuality, and the effects of age on sexuality. One of the more interesting and perhaps controversial aspects of her physiologic speculations revolves around what she calls a "biphasic" approach to sexual functioning. Kaplan cites evidence that excitement and arousal in the male and female are under the influence of the parasympathetic nervous system, while orgasm is primarily mediated by the sympathetic nervous system. This permits her to make a biphasic clinical differentiation between the disorders of arousal and those of orgasm. To what extent this theory will be confirmed by additional physiologic and clinical research remains to be seen, but at least at the moment the data seem to support her hypothesis.

Will sex counselors and therapists be able to make effective use of the material in this book? Trained psychotherapists will find in it a goldmine of ideas for their clinical use. However, those many sex counselors around the country who have been using Masters and Johnson's techniques in a cookbook fashion, without regard to the subtleties of the interaction between partners or to the intrapsychic factors affecting the relationship or attitudes toward sexuality, may be shocked by the realization that their techniques fall far short of what ought to be done for patients or clients with serious sexual problems. The great detail with which Kaplan discusses people's reactions to the specific forms of sexual re-education introduced by Masters and Johnson, including the exquisite use of fantasy, should serve notice to these poorly trained therapists that a slavish and uncritical use of any method, however powerful, for relieving human distress, invites failure and disillusionment.

**Sexual and Marital Health—The Physician as a Consultant.** Clark E. Vincent. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill, 1973. (pp. \$7.95 cloth, \$5.95 paper)

*Reviewed by Daniel, H. Labby, M.D.*

This splendid book is devoted to marital health—more particularly to Clark Vincent's lifelong devotion to the idea that the marriage relationship has a most powerful potential for enriching the quality of human life, but to do so, its health is fundamental. Viewing the marital state as a component of health argues convincingly, as David Mace states in one of the two forewords, "that we are callously allowing potentially good marriages to die of neglect, of malnutrition, of exposure to destructive disease; that this is costing us an appalling price in personality disorder and social dislocation; and that the time has come to recognize that marriage is a highly complex and difficult task, offering great rewards to those who succeed and abject misery to those who fail." Clark Vincent's plea therefore is to provide the same competent health promoting services for marriage, that are presently available in other areas vital to our well being. How can one approach a marriage relationship with the care of its health in mind? Vincent suggests being sensitive to categories of the relationship: "the dignity of self love, an acceptance of each other's impressions as reality, an awareness of changing needs as well as appropriate responses to those changing needs, the constant improvement of communication skills, and development of techniques—all of which involve the freedom to be oneself, to be different, to quest, to experiment, and to err."

In a preliminary chapter both physicians and relevant health professionals are urged to assume responsibility for being consultants to the marriages in their practice. By way of making this possible, the nine chapters that follow offer fundamental explorations of the above relationship categories ranging over the techniques of communication through identifying those forces which expose the deep haunting doubts about self worth, the potential for growth, and loving vs. non-loving relationships. Also considered are the problems of the anxious adolescent, the perplexed parent,

early marriages, marriages with extended age-span mates, illicit pregnancies, and extramarital affairs with a final plea for understanding marital health as a new health specialty. This is more than a book on marriage and sex: it is a consummate guide for those unskilled and perplexed by human relationships and one of the most readable and penetrating discourses on marriage presently available in the literature. It is highly recommended to those now active within the field and to physicians with a taste for such work. This wise book should be read by those entering the field or considering marital work as a career, as well as by those long experienced who wish to read a clear and insightful statement by an experienced professional with an urgent contemporary message to all health professionals. It should also be read by those physicians, clergy and other health and mental health workers whose practice brings to them people in trouble with their human relationships, in or out of marriage. **PR.**

**Sexual Conduct: The Social Sources of Human Sexuality.** John H. Gagnon and William Simon. Chicago, IL: Aldine, 1973. (307 pp.; \$8.95).

*Reviewed by Robert Staples, Ph.D.*

This is a book which attempts to correct the prevailing view that biology and nature are the powerful forces that shape human sexual behavior. In ten chapters, six of which have previously been published elsewhere, the authors illustrate how many of the physical dimensions of sexual behavior are dictated by norms, roles, statuses and social meanings. It is an original and interesting effort to place human sexuality in a sociological and psychological framework.

Two of the more interesting chapters in the book deal with male homosexuality and the lesbian. The authors point out that our ignorance of the lives of these two groups has led to an unusual preoccupation with the etiology of their "deviance" and the sexual aspects of their conduct. The truth is that their sexual activities carry the same weight in their lives as in the heterosexual world. What homosex-

uals must cope with as a result of an uncommon sexual preference are the problems that center around their work, friendship patterns, family relationships, religion, etc. In the case of the male homosexual, the straight society labels him as a deviant and isolates him in the gay world where it becomes very difficult to transfer back into the heterosexual environment. Similarly, our emphasis on the sexuality of the lesbian masks the fact that she follows normative female patterns in her nonsexual career.

While this book presents a unique approach to the study of human sexual conduct, the authors may have fallen into the same trap as do those who emphasize the physical aspects of sex. What they consider as sexual actions which derive from social sources may actually be natural responses to sexual stimuli. Social roles and norms may have their greatest influence in what they proscribe—not prescribe. The authors also rely heavily on dated Kinsey statistics for many of their assumptions about what is sexually happening today. More recent studies would reveal some significant changes in sexual behavior which would also require modification of their theories about the meanings attached to certain sexual acts.

This book, however, constitutes a valuable addition to the body of literature on sexual behavior. It is primarily written for a professional audience since it requires some familiarity with the terminology and with sexual research. In fact, because of the authors' writing style it makes for rather laborious reading. There are other aspects of sexuality that have not been touched upon in great detail, e.g., group sex, interracial relations, etc. In sum, it is a good beginning in an area that remains to be explored in all its ramifications. **A, PR**

**More Joy.** Alex Comfort. New York, NY: Crown, 1974. (224 pp.; \$12.95 illustrated, \$7.95 non-illustrated.)

Reviewed by Warren R. Johnson, Ed.D.

I saw only one review that was very critical of this book's lovemaking companion, *The Joy of Sex*—and that critique seemed to me labored. More

typically, reviewers wrote much as Robert Harper did (*Rational Living*, Spring 1974, p. 44) "... superior to almost anything else dealing with the heterosexual relationship..." Comfort himself believes that, in one year, *Joy I* has "altered the face of sex education by bringing the healthy discussion of sexuality into... the drawing room. It was the first explicitly sexual book for the coffee tables" (*Joy II*, p. 6). Sales of close to two million would tend to support this except that other sex books that professionals could recognize as pernicious and harmful in their biases and misinformation also sold in equivalent numbers.

In *Joy II*, Comfort switches emphasis from how to manage the physical side of sex relations to improving relationships and personal growth through sexuality. Because of my work with the handicapped I am particularly sympathetic with his efforts to blend technique with sensitivity in relationship, because just this same kind of blending is crucial to the training of clinicians for serving the needs of children with various developmental disorders. Just as therapy for the handicapped requires know how in both technique and relationships, so does sex therapy which practically everyone seems to need. Comfort says: "we're concerned with the uses of physical sensation and the background in which it fits." (P. 10). This background often leaves much to be desired. Basic cultural miseducation requires that we get rid of three basic hangups which tend to block More Joy: "We have to learn that people aren't dangerous, that the body isn't shameful, and that no rewarding sexual sensation is abnormal or bad unless it's antisocial in some way." (P. 10). Comfort believes that sexual growth in these three respects can help enormously in getting at other common hangups. I am among those who would agree wholeheartedly.

The book contains five major parts: *The Language of the Body*, *His and Hers*, *Couples and Others*, *Resources* and *Special Needs*. I found the material on babies worthwhile because (1) it makes the usually ignored point that freedom in one's sexual life isn't compatible with an exclusively child-bearing and child-rearing life style; and (2) it outlines the role of babyhood in initiating or avoiding the crucial hangups that tend to plague sexual expres-

sion later in life. Following are illustrative morsels: Comfort's advice to a mother who finds her daughter masturbating: "Rejoice and be exceedingly glad that she's learning a skill... to enjoy all her life... for adult love-making..." (P. 65). In "His and Hers:" "Maleness and femaleness are in terms of cooperative self-realization. If we can make up for the hundreds of years spent in turning women off, men as well as women will learn to enjoy the results (p. 142). In "Couples and Others," he recognizes that many married couples do not need or want extramarital sexual outlets which, however, provide enrichment of their own relationship for some and enhancement of personal growth for others.

He warns of mischief-makers, who seduce and attempt to destroy (p. 153). A major world problem is that "Most great powers are now run by a minority of sick people, suffering from their inability to eroticize and hence humanize their experiences, who use the rest of us for play therapy." (P. 133). On sexual addiction: "If sex gets to be a substitute for life, you've got problems which need dealing with." (P. 167.) Sharing as opposed to swapping, means the sharing of sexual experience with another couple by making love in each other's presence (p. 168). Watching another couple can be most arousing and perhaps instructive. Most of the people who have written about sexuality never saw a couple making love: "How many books about football, telling you exactly how you should play it, have been written by people who never actually saw a game?" (p. 95). This point about pontificators on sexual technique is made more than once, and is one reason why, in "Resources," Comfort ranks self-help with other couples as a major resource.

About the illustrations: these are a continuation of the ones so highly praised in *Joy I*. They could scarcely be more explicit, but I have yet to hear them alleged as pornographic. I particularly liked (as others may dislike) the inclusion of female underarm hair as part of erotic attractiveness. Perhaps the pointless, institutionalized, often painful attack on this part of the female anatomy is on its way out?

As a student of psycholinguistic aspects of human health, I attach especial importance to Comfort's choice of both book titles. The widespread linkage of the words *joy* and *sex*—in the

advertising campaign reaching libraries, homes, colleges, schools and the public press—will help markedly in the growing campaign to clean up our attitudes about sex by associating it with the good rather than the bad in life. Both *Joy I* and *Joy II* indeed belong with the very good things of life. A, PR

**Everything a Teenager Wants to Know About Sex . . . and Should.** Harry Preston with Jeanette Margolin, M.D. Chatsworth, CA: Books for Better Living, 1973. (176 pp., \$1.25.)

*Reviewed by Lorna B. Flynn, M.A.*

When it comes to sex, writer Harry Preston and psychiatrist Jeanette Margolin appear to know their *coitus in ano* from their *coitus in axilla*. Like most books for teenagers about sex, the purpose of this one is to help teenagers make responsible and informed decisions about their sexuality. However, unlike many other books, its basic premise is that "every human being has the right to express himself sexually and in his own way so long as he does not infringe on the rights of others." Preston and Margolin include teenagers in their definition of human being and they hope teenagers will look at sex as pleasurable.

The book covers the usual areas of anatomy, pregnancy, contraception, abortion, VD, masturbation, and homosexuality. It even has a chapter entitled "Off the Beaten Path" which briefly discusses topics such as transsexualism, transvestism, fetishism, sadism, and masochism. Because the authors are answering questions young people really wonder about instead of those which professionals think they should ask, this book stands out as filling a real need, especially for the more sophisticated teenager.

For sure, many parents won't want their children reading the answers to questions like: "What does a boy's semen taste like?" or "Is it all right to use a vibrator on your sex organs?" But for those people who complain that most books at best soft pedal pleasure, this book will be welcome.

The format of the book is question-answer with a brief introduction for parents and another for teenagers. It concludes with a discussion of responsible sexual decision making for tomorrow's parents and a short glossary of slang terms. Regrettably there is no index.

The title of the book is poor for obvious reasons. One substantive weakness of the book is its flip attitude about sex and aging:

"Question: Is it true that married couples stop having intercourse after a few years?

Answer: No. While most people have less intercourse as the years go by, there are many couples in their forties, fifties and older who still have sex together regularly, and often with greater enjoyment because pregnancy is no longer a possibility."

One of the things I like most is the books' consistent single standard for men and women. Not only does it encourage teenage women to satisfy their sexual drives, but it frankly tells girls who feel they were "taken advantage of" that they can only blame themselves if they were at all willing. LT

**Sound Sex and the Aging Heart.** Lee D. Scheingold and Nathaniel N. Wagner, New York, NY: Human Sciences Press, 1974. (169 pp.; \$7.95).

*Reviewed by Evalyn S. Gendel, M.D.*

This book offers well written explanations of questions asked and unasked in the anxiety-ridden area of sexual activity and heart disease, aging or not. The authors have delineated the normal function of the heart with explicit descriptions of how the most frequent disorders occur in this normal pattern, whether the disease is inherited or acquired or occurs through an evolutionary aging process.

There is special consideration given to the desexualization of various individuals including those who are growing older and are concerned with a "mid life" reassessment often depicted as a time of crisis.

The authors provide a sensitive analysis of myths surrounding disabili-

ty and death of cardiac patients occurring during sexual intercourse with marital and extramarital partners. Though admitting to documentation of higher mortality in extramarital intercourse for the person with prior disability, they caution that many such events occur within marriage but are unreported. Where the conditions of extramarital coitus involve increased intake of food and drink, guilt feelings, and/or fear of sexual performance for either partner, increased cardiovascular strain develops which may lead to the small percentage of such reports. The key factor they believe is the strangeness or lack of complete comfort with the partner, rather than the "extramarital" aspect *per se*, unless the above conditions are predominant.

All of the content of this book is presented in an objective, humane manner indicating that the social, moral, ethical, and legal implications reside with the reader. Societal expectations are presented, but the manner in which the individual experiences variations from these "norms" without discomfort are examined. The theme of respect for oneself with an awareness of what personal behavior is congruent with this concept and with concern for others is evident throughout the book.

An array of cardiovascular conditions and the limitations surrounding them are presented. At the same time, prescriptions for physical activity and the manner in which these derived are explored. The conclusions and data for this are based on the authors involvement with the Washington State Health Association Cardiac Work Evaluation Clinic. Although the focus is on the aging heart, anyone with a cardiac problem will find a vast amount of information concisely and clearly communicated.

An overall consideration for aging and the factors which influence the aging process, both psychological and physiological, afford the reader an excellent framework for a perspective on aging where the chronological attitudinal "mix" is evident as a major element.

Finally, there emerges a configuration of the complex pervasiveness of sexuality throughout the life of an individual. The critical impact on continuing intellectual growth and physical well being which an understanding of one's own sexuality offers, be-



comes more pronounced as the scope of this work is absorbed.

This is a thoroughly enjoyable book for which the audience is unlimited. It is useful to individuals looking for information about personal cardiac conditions and sexual activity. Far more, it is for those who work with patients, clients, counselors, and students as an adjunct to their current professional or experiential knowledge, or as a review, or as a reminder of the need for individualization about sexuality, disease and aging. **A, PR**

**Sexual Adjustment, A Guide for the Spinal Cord Injured.** Martha Ferguson Gregory. Bloomington, IL: Accent on Living Inc. P.O. Box 726, 1974. (73 pp.; \$4.95).

*Reviewed by Theodore M. Cole, M.D.\**

This is a new addition to the slowly growing body of literature on sex and the physically disabled. Its compact size and its soft and attractive cover all contribute toward the likelihood that it will be picked up and read.

Its title suggests that it is written for the spinal cord injured person himself or herself. Its content and style, however, are unmistakably academic (it is taken from a graduate thesis written by an able-bodied woman who is married to a quadriplegic man) and its content, therefore, is more appropriate for professional people who work in the area of physical disability. The first half of the book deals with physiological and psychological aspects of spinal cord injury and serves as a framework for the second half which focuses more upon sexual adjustment. Sexual adjustment is discussed both physiologically and behaviorally. The author's choice of literature citations leaves this reviewer to detect a tendency to treat other than genital sex acts as allowable and not to be considered perverse but nonetheless not quite as "normal" or desirable as penile-vaginal intercourse. Also same-sex relationships are almost entirely overlooked. This results in a less than affirmative and positive attitude toward the wide variety of sex acts which may occur between consenting adults. The author seems not to have injected herself and her own experi-

ences into the text which might have helped to add personalness and permission to be sexual, both essential to an intellectually and emotionally integrated approach to sexuality.

She concludes with a section on counseling and family adjustment which clinches the book's basic orientation to the professional rather than to the disabled, nonprofessional reader. The content of the chapter on counseling is brief and offers some useful perspective to help the counselor understand the client and the problems shared with his/her partner. **A, PR**

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*\*By invitation. Dr. Cole is Professor, Dept. of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, University of Minnesota Medical School.*

**Sex Isn't That Simple: The New Sexuality on Campus.** Richard Hettlinger. New York, NY: Seabury Press, 1974. (250 pp. \$3.50 paper).

**Existential Sexuality: Choosing to Love.** Peter Koestenbaum. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1974. (179 pp. \$2.45 paper).

*Reviewed by Lester A. Kirkendall Ph.D.*

These two books are concerned with putting human sexuality into a broad, philosophical context. It may be happenstance that both have appeared in the same summer. Perhaps, however, this represents the growing need to find a meaningful, more penetrating focus for human sexuality. With the diminishing importance and desirability of using sex for procreation, other questions arise: what is its purpose—for hedonistic pleasure, for titillation, for relieving tensions? Perhaps, but Hettlinger and Koestenbaum are saying that choice is more than yielding to impulse—there is a philosophical framework which needs to be taken into account.

Hettlinger's central concern is "to help people recognize the complexity of sexual relationships and develop an enjoyment of sexuality as a creative element in personal growth." He in-

sists that sexual expression is a social experience and it is the quality of social intimacy that makes it so.

His book will give little comfort either to those who argue that sexual abstinence is the only path to follow, or to those who think recreational sex ("balling") should be accepted without question. Defining sexuality as broadly as he does, Hettlinger would say that abstinence is impossible—from intercourse, yes; from sexual expression, no. Recreational sex, unless a certain commitment is involved, will in the long run lead to ennui and disillusion if not to exploitation and alienation. He dismisses the argument that "an occasional experience of recreational sex is symptomatic of serious emotional immaturity," but he does say,

"... the college student should graduate from this type of behavior as definitely as he or she has graduated from high school. The values and influence of those who advocate impersonal sex as a way of life or practice it in preference to affective and integrative relationships may have long-term consequences for our society."

Applying his philosophy of responsible decision-making for growth and creative experience in interpersonal relationships Hettlinger has a chapter, "Gay Can Be Good." In discussing homosexual relations, he hopes for the time when,

"People will be able to accept the fact that it doesn't really matter all that much whether or not they are homosexual, but that it does matter whether their sexual relations with others are mature and creative. Both heterosexuals and homosexuals will be set free from a compulsive need to demonstrate what they are and able to concern themselves with how they are as sexual beings."

Regardless of the nature of the experience—group marriage, prostitution, pornography, premarital intercourse, virginity, masturbation—Hettlinger always returns to his basic philosophy to justify this position.

*Sex Isn't That Simple* will be valuable to students in still another way. Hettlinger looks briefly but searchingly at the ideas advanced by such persons as Freud, Marcuse, Reiss, Hugh Hefner, Masters and Johnson, Albert Ellis, Havelock Ellis, Norman Brown,

Sherfey, Millett and others. An appendix provides some basic facts about birth control, abortion and venereal disease.

Koestenbaum in *Existential Sexuality* comes to his philosophy through his interest in existential psychology fortified by his experience in counseling and experiences at Esalen. His contention is that sexuality can be combined with or dropped from many different patterns of living if an individual understands and accepts honestly the meaning and consequence of his choice. Being a humanistic psychologist the discussion is much concerned with such matters as body concepts, authenticity, commitment, existential sex, freedom, choices, the surrender/conquest syndrome, self-disclosure, the determination of limits, resistance, values, and responsibility. To make the meaning of these terms clear, Koestenbaum includes numerous illustrations and case histories. The concern is to free people to choose that which is authentic for them. Many illustrations experienced through counseling are included. His interest extends (in Chapters 13-16) to existential parenthood.

The book is directed to those who are heterosexually based, open to experimenting within conventional limits, and psychologically oriented. *Existential Sexuality* is thus limited in its appeal.

At a couple of points (Chapter 6) further elaboration and updating seem needed. First, Koestenbaum takes almost no account of the extensive experimentation and pluralistic lifestyles which now occupy the time and attention, particularly of the sexually avant-garde. Second, he fails to take into adequate account both the possibility and desirability of reevaluating and/or changing social attitudes toward sexual conduct. More flexibility is needed here. The point is made that the "only irrevocable given, uninterpreted, and invariable fact about sex is a specific kind of genital 'itch' or a generalized urge of pursuit." This is,

"Superimposed . . . [upon] two kinds of interpretations: inaccessible and accessible, unfree and free. Inaccessible interpretations are learned, but learned early and learned so thoroughly that the individual seems to have lost all free control over them. Accessible interpretations are social conventions, ideas, and fads."

He adds that,

"The conventions of society are a powerful given—both in terms of the strength of the laws and the weight of social ostracism. The pervert has chosen a countersocial behavior pattern. And it is from the asocial character of his response that he suffers, not from the response itself. The problem is therefore how he can come to terms with the asocial character of his responses. This dilemma he can solve by first placing himself in touch with that part of his lifestyle over which he does have free control."

There will be no disagreement when the conventions of society are described as a "powerful given," but is the task of adjustment solely and strictly that of the individual?

There is a kind of indiscriminate lumping together of various sexual expressions in a way which implies that each may or may not be a perversion. Thus he comments that the sexual itch,

"can be satisfied in any number of ways: through heterosexual intercourse, through homosexual intercourse, through masturbation, through sodomy and other perversions."

No definition of perversion is given. With what we currently know of human sexuality how should it be defined? May not existing social patterns themselves be perverse? Or do we now need the term at all?

Both authors' efforts to relate sexuality to a life philosophy have much merit, and they should be thanked for this contribution. **LT, A, PR**

**Sex and the Confessional.** Norberto Valentini and Clara Di Meglio, Eds. (Translated by S. Davis). New York, NY: Stein and Day, 1974. (213 pp.; \$6.95).

*Reviewed by James B. Nelson\**

The exposé nature of the title is accurate: this book, with a bare minimum of commentary, consists of selected transcripts from 636 tape-re-

coded sex-oriented confessions in Roman Catholic churches in Italy. A bestseller in that country, the book earned banning by the Church and excommunication of its journalist authors. In a Watergate era when our consciences have been honed a bit concerning deceptive information-gathering and ends-justify-means approaches, we rightly raise serious moral questions about the authors' methodology. Granted, it produced useful results: authentic and representative responses of Italian Catholic priests to sex-related confessions. Granted, the "penitents" were actually part of the investigative team, so no *genuine* confessions were violated. But confessional booths were bugged, the clergy was tricked. And, though on this side of the ocean some claims for the sanctity of privileged communication in government have been stretched beyond credulity, I do not believe that even the need for the information in this book justifies the willful violation of confidentiality in counseling and confession.

So much for the method. The contents are illuminating, somewhat predictable, fascinating, at times repetitious and boring, depressing and, occasionally, hopeful—all of the above. The "penitents" geared their "confessions" to six general areas for clerical response. First, are there any boundaries for permissible, "love play" within marriage? (Priestly responses: love play is permissible, even necessary, if preparatory to complete intercourse; used without introjection and emission, however, it is sinful.) Second, can intercourse by engaged couples, who have not yet practiced it, be sanctioned? (Responses: the great majority were strictly uncompromising; the few conciliatory priests still gave no real permission.) Third, can engaged couples who have been having intercourse continue to do so without jeopardizing full participation in the Church? (Responses: the priestly majority would give absolution if the penitent promised to stop the practice; a small minority were more flexible.) Fourth, what of the situation of the unmarried middle-aged woman yearning for love and sexual expression? (Responses: unanimous insistence upon absolute chastity.) Fifth, what of contraception within marital intercourse? (Responses: a mixed picture—about one-third traditionally intransigent, a third permissive, and a

third absolving the "innocent" partner who merely acquiesced in the other's use of contraception.) Sixth, can a separated or divorced person form a new love-sex bond with another? (Responses: four-fifths insisted upon complete chastity, but one-fifth granted absolution and some kind of permission.)

The most disheartening thing about the majority of priestly attitudes portrayed here is the rigorism with which they perceive a supposedly immutable, inflexible, and external law which takes precedence over the variety of human feelings, needs, and situations. Linked with this is the constant focus upon external acts (including "how many times did you . . . ?"), with little concern for the meaning of acts to persons, and little recognition of the possibility of moral ambiguity in life. Sadly interweaving the priestly responses, also, are ample instances of male sexism and of the occasional lascivious pressing for intimate sexual details. It needs be said that a minority of priests, to their credit, appear to be more healthy, humanly sensitive, and theologically perceptive than the majority.

The reader should bear in mind that the Italian Catholic Church is hardly representative of many other Catholic branches, nor is this a valid picture of the Christian Church at large. However, three general conclusions are unavoidable: First, the entire Christian Church must reclaim and effectively communicate a responsible sex-positive ethic. Second, whatever other virtues it may have, priestly celibacy more often than not is detrimental to helpful sexual counseling. And third, theological education (whatever the religious affiliation) needs thorough and effective programs of professional sex education which deal not only with accurate sex information and sound theological perspectives but also with the individual's own sexual feelings and self-understanding. The authors, even with their objectionable methods, their own irritating moral rigorism (albeit of a different stripe than the priests'), and their odd question-

begging final chapter, may have contributed to these needed changes—almost in spite of themselves. **A, PR**

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*\*By invitation. Dr. Nelson is Professor of Christian Ethics, United Theological Seminary, Minneapolis, MN.*

**Perspectives on Human Sexuality: Psychological, Social and Cultural Research Findings.** Nathaniel N. Wagner. New York: Behavioral Publications, 1974. (528 pp.; \$14.95, \$6.95 paper).

*Reviewed by Lester A. Kirkendall, Ph.D.*

This book of 23 readings, provides original research materials in human sexuality for college and medical students. Part I has to do with sex differences and the development of sexuality. Articles by Freud, Money, Schmidt and Sigusch and others deal in various ways with the psychological consequences of physical anatomy—sex-role stereotypes, homosexuality as an aspect of sexual dimorphism, early and late maturation in girls, the extent to which women are prejudiced against women, sexual differences in response to sexual stimulation, and an interesting if fruitless effort to distinguish differences in male and female orgasm (none, except the female's propensity for multiple orgasm, could be found).

Part II deals with psychological factors in sexual behavior and features authors such as Rainwater, Reiss, Clark and Wallin, Abramson, Lo-Piccolo, and Manosevitz. The subjects include sexual behavior in lower class groups, Negro-White sexual permissiveness, the relation of women's sexual responsiveness to the length and quality of their marriages, masturbation and personality attributes, value differences between mother and daughters, and differences in early sexual behavior of homosexual and heterosexual males.

Part III, Sexual Behavior in Cross-cultural Perspective is conceived as an extension of the findings in Ford and Beach's classical study, *Patterns of Sexual Behavior*. The five articles in this section feature sexual patterns in Scandinavia, Germany, United States, Canada, England, and Gusii (southwest Kenya). The best known authors are Luckey and Nass, and Christensen and Gregg.

Part IV extends further to studies of special populations, including older persons, pregnant married and unmarried women, swinging couples, and rape victims.

The contribution of the editor is confined to an introductory statement and a prelude to each part—each slightly over a page in length, plus coauthorship of two essays. This book is produced by photocopying typewritten pages, but it is clear-cut, easy to read, and a good representation of the relatively inexpensive book format we are more and more likely to see. **A, PR**



#### ABOUT THE REVIEWERS

Reviews of books, booklets, journal articles and audio-visuals are written by present and former members of the SIECUS Board and Staff. Background information about present Board members and staff can be found on the back cover of the SIECUS Reports. Identification of former Board members follows:

Warren R. Johnson, Ed.D., Professor of Health Education and Director, Children's Health and Developmental Clinic, University of Maryland, College Park, MD.

Harold I. Lief, M.D., Professor of Psychiatry, Director of Center for the Study of Sex Education in Medicine, University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine, Philadelphia, PA.

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**Audience Level Indicators.** The bold type letter(s) following book reviews indicate the general audience level. Keys to categories are as follows: **C**—Children (elementary grades), **ET**—Early teens (junior high), **LT**—Late teens (senior high), **A**—College, general adult public, **P**—Parents, **PR**—Professionals (educators, physicians, clergy, public health workers, nurses, etc.).

# AUDIO-VISUAL REVIEWS

Audio-visual material is reviewed by Derek L. Burleson, Ed.D., SIECUS Director of Educational and Research Services, unless otherwise indicated.

**On Being Gay.** Cassette Tape, discussion manual. Thesis, P.O. Box 11724, Pittsburgh, PA 15228. Price: \$6.98.

This audio-cassette, originally produced for use in study programs in the Presbyterian Church on the topic of homosexuality, has fortunately been released for educational use by any group interested in dealing with homosexuality on both a cognitive and emotional level. The voices and viewpoints heard on the cassette include Phyllis Lyon, a nationally known authority on lesbianism and co-author with Del Martin of *Lesbian Woman*; Bill Johnson, a minister in the United Church of Christ whose ordination in 1972 was the subject of much controversy because of his acknowledged homosexuality; Herbert Vandervoort, a psychiatrist who directs the Sex Counseling Center of the University of California Medical School in San Francisco; Walter Barnett, a professor of law at the University of California and author of *Sexual Freedom and the Constitution*; Ross Greek, pastor of the West Hollywood Presbyterian Church who has ministered to the homosexual community in his parish for many years; and Dr. David Napier, president of the Pacific School of Religion, the seminary where Bill Johnson studied for the ministry.

Complementing the professional insights of the above are interviews with two young gay persons, Jim and Lyndall, whose fears, confusions, and parental conflicts over their homosexuality provide excellent case studies of the problems faced by gay people, in a society that has been traditionally hostile to variant forms of sexual expression. While there is considerable emphasis on the audio-cassette about the role of the church in dealing with the issue of homosexuality, this should in no way inhibit its use with other groups. For some,

this cassette will be informative; for others, consciousness-raising. It will assuredly stimulate more informed and sensitive discussion about a topic that is still shrouded with ignorance and "sick" jokes. For high school, college and adult groups this audio-cassette and its helpful discussion manual will provide resource material for several sessions.

**It Couldn't Happen to Me.** 16 mm sound/color, 28 min. Perennial Education, Inc., 1825 Willow Road, P.O. Box 236, Northfield, IL 60093. Price: \$300; rental, \$30.

Contrary to the title this is not a "scare" film about premarital sex. It does recognize that many young people today are sexually active and attempts to analyze some of the pressures at work in the youth culture today which inhibit the use of effective methods of birth control. Opinions of professionals are interspersed with discussions among young people on the topic of contemporary sexual attitudes. A variety of points of view are presented from those young people who still firmly believe that sex belongs in marriage to those who see nothing wrong with it as long as there is no exploitation by either partner. Especially effective is a discussion among a group of pregnant teenagers talking about such reasons for not using birth control as guilt about sex, desire for spontaneity, denial of risk, fear of parents' reactions, and lack of adequate information about the various methods. All in all this is a balanced film which should find wide use with older high school students and college students. It also is good program material for parent education programs.

**There's A New You Comin'—For Girls.** Sound filmstrip, LP Record or Cassette. Marsh Film, P.O. Box 8082, Shawnee Mission, KS 66208. Price: \$17 with record, \$20 with cassette.

This is the companion filmstrip for girls to the one for boys with the same title (See review SR Jan. '74). It covers the physical and emotional development of the prepubertal girl and should find ready acceptance in the intermediate grades of many communities. Unfortunately, the decision to produce separate filmstrips for boys and girls practically assures that they will be shown in segregated settings. Most likely the boys will not see the girls' filmstrip and the girls will not see the boys' filmstrip. The real loss, of course, is the valuable learning that takes place when boys and girls are together allowed to ask questions and discuss feelings and attitudes about each other. This will never happen in sex-segregated classes which only perpetuate the attitude that it somehow isn't proper to discuss our bodies in the presence of the opposite sex. When will we learn!

On the positive side this filmstrip does an effective job of explaining the range in growth rates, and technical vocabulary is defined in terms appropriate for the age group intended. Menstruation is handled in a positive manner without the pronatalist tone so prevalent in much menstruation education material. Sound guidance on personal hygiene and nutrition is also covered. It is encouraging to see educational materials beginning to acknowledge new roles for women as this filmstrip does when it makes the statement, "... quiet times will give your *mind* some exercise, while you think over all the terrific possibilities for women today, and what kind of tomorrow you want for yourself."

**VD—Kids Get It Too.** 41 min., 16mm, sound/color. ACI Films, 35 West 45 Street, New York, NY 10036. Price: \$190.

This is a film about family conflict rather than venereal disease and therefore will have minimal value for VD education programs. The dramatic episode around which this film is developed gets in the way of its presentation of the vital information about symptoms, consequences, and prevention that is essential in any VD educational material.

Kathy, a fourteen-year-old girl from a middle class background, is diagnosed as having gonorrhea. Her mother is in a state of emotional distress, unable to accept the fact that her little girl could have this awful disease. The father spends a lot of film time trying to console the mother, but does have the presence of mind to listen to the doctor and sees to it that his daughter gets treatment for the infection. Kathy is sullen, insolent and totally uncooperative. Only through the kindly guidance of the doctor is she made aware of the seriousness of the disease, and in the scenes with the doctor the viewer does learn a few facts about VD. Given the epidemic nature of VD today it is difficult to recommend any VD educational material that does not deal directly and explicitly with preventive measures. This film fails to do so.

**Truck Stop.** 16mm sound, color or b&w, 28 min. Paulist Productions, P.O. Box 1057, Pacific Palisades, CA 90272. Price: \$325 color, \$160 b&w; rental: \$18.95 color, \$12.95 b&w.

What does it take to make a commitment to another person? In this short absorbing drama we follow the evolution of a rootless young woman from a life of one-night affairs and a succession of jobs to the potential of a committed and caring relationship with an older man, who was himself a drifter. Shilly works as a waitress in a seedy truck-stop diner. Its owner, T.J., has lived the transient life of a truck driver, but now has found some permanence and goal in life in this little diner in which he has invested his life

savings. "This place is the first time I ever stopped. I've been blowing around like a piece of paper," says T.J. He is ready to make a commitment to another person and Shilly is very much on his mind.

Shilly, on the other hand, has been hurt too many times to be able to reciprocate to his expressions of tenderness and concern. Her desolate and lonely life is portrayed in one episode where she goes to bed with Mike, the local gas station attendant, an affair that is short-lived as he moves on to another part of the state. Another episode involves a surprise visit by Shilly's mother, an alcoholic prostitute who has been a drifter all of her adult life. Shilly sees herself repeating the pattern of her mother's empty life. She comes to the realization that she needs T.J. and he needs her. For the first time in her life Shilly has come to know what it means to give and receive love.

This "slice of life" drama can be enjoyed strictly as a film whose script and acting are first rate. As an educational film, which is its intent, it can serve effectively as a discussion vehicle for young adults wrestling with the issue of what is involved in making a commitment to another person. It is unlikely that the characters of Shilly and T.J. fall within the experience of many of the potential viewers of this film, but as a case study of a relationship, it provides many avenues for thoughtful discussion.



## RESEARCH AWARD ENTRIES

In addition to the winners, the following studies were entered in the 1974 SIECUS Research Award Program. Included are the names and addresses of the investigators. None of these studies has been published, but fellow researchers might wish to correspond with the investigators.

1. "An Assessment of Knowledge of Contraception Methodology"  
Beverly Batchelder  
313 North 24th St.  
La Crosse, WI 54601
2. "Blood Pressure and Heart Rate Response During Sexual Activity"  
Eleanor D. Rhodes  
c/o Dept. of Physiological Nursing  
University of Washington  
Seattle, WA
3. "Changes in Knowledge, Attitudes and Psychophysiological Responses Associated with a Family Life and Sex Education Unit Administered to College Freshmen"  
Miltiades Vorgeas  
33 Pickam Road  
Salem, MA 01970
4. "The Effects of a Program of Sex Education on the Attitudes of Junior High School Students and Their Parents"  
Chrisann Diprizio  
8417 N. Monticello  
Skokie, IL 60076
5. "Family Planning: Is Nursing Education Meeting Its Responsibility?"  
Zorka Acevedo  
5 Emerson Place  
Upper Montclair, NJ 07043
6. "Pregnancy: The Social Meaning of a Physiological Event"  
Ruth Seiden Miller  
P.O. Box 531  
Wauquoit, MA 02536
7. "Sexual Behavior and Fertility Control Among Inner City Adolescents:  
Charles B. Arnold, M.D. and  
Madelon L. Finkel  
Graduate School of Public Administration  
New York University  
4 Washington Square  
New York, NY 10003
8. "Stimulating Change in Moral Judgement: An Experimental Validation of an Innovative Educational Approach to Sexual Morality"  
Mary E. Speicher  
316 Larson Hall  
Harvard University  
Appian Way  
Cambridge, MA 02138
9. "A Study of Parent and Teacher Attitudes Toward Sex Education"  
Jennifer Stucker, Robert Bjerke, and  
Patrick Maher  
c/o 4J Motors  
6000 Pacific Blvd.  
Huntington Park, CA 90255
10. "A Study of Sex Information Sources within a Secondary School — A Health Education Research Project"  
Patricia Marcklinger  
Amherst Central High School  
4301 Main St.  
Amherst, NJ 14226

*Continued from page 1*

tion as acceptable sexual behavior on many other grounds than inherent self-pleasuring. Why the need to excuse it at all? The essence of this pleasurable act lies in the dimension to self-awareness and self-confidence that it may provide and that otherwise may not be found. A dramatic result can be the development of self-confidence in one's own competence. This occurred with a twenty-five year old man afflicted with cerebral palsy who proudly told me that in his world filled with constant reminders of his dependency on others, masturbation was one thing he could do for himself and he did a "damn good job!"

Masturbation can and does alleviate premenstrual tension for many women. It can confirm to individuals that they are sexual beings who are sexually responsive, to the enhancement of their self-image. Self-pleasuring and its accompanying fantasies can be a rich experience in an otherwise tedious existence. It was so for one man who confided that the sexual fantasies and self-pleasuring he anticipated and experienced helped him get through the long day as he sat in his chair at the nursing home. Or, it can be a comfort as it was to my widowed friend who reported that masturbation was a preferred behavior at the peak of her grief for the lost lover who had been her husband. Our sexuality has no parameters but is a part of our total being — thus it is natural to experience our bodies joyfully rather than in fear or guilt, in such a way that the experience is a positive one.

To know and enjoy oneself is a prerequisite for a positive self-concept, self-realization and self-esteem, qualities essential for positive human growth. Isn't it time that professional sex therapists and counselors, those of us who see masturbation as positive, pleasurable, comforting behavior, take an affirmative stand for it? The SIECUS Position Statement does just that.

People should not have to apologize for their sexuality and those sexual expressions of it that are private and non-

exploitive. I believe that one's sexuality can become a positive force and as self-affirming as any other dimension of our being. In too many instances individual human potential is thwarted and denied because of sexual fears, threats and self-doubts. Assent to our sexuality must begin within ourselves. Can we permit us and others to be sexual? This may be what is best about the SIECUS Position Statement. It gives us that permission. I applaud SIECUS for taking a stand to insure to individuals their right to be sexual. I am concerned that those of us who agree with this Statement take heart from SIECUS and communicate this message widely. I will venture that the more the SIECUS Statement is promoted, the more helpful the positive connotation of masturbation will be.

My greatest concern is not so much with the acceptance of this Position Statement among sex educated persons, as it is with the communication of the essence of this message to all individuals. That concern accounts for the title of this article. How do we reach individuals and share such a positive attitude? Merely saying such formerly taboo words as masturbation usually elicits shock or puzzlement accompanied by a putting off polite response. Yet most people are interested and eager for information, permission and comfort about their sexuality and sexual behaviors. The fact that we know that the majority of individuals do masturbate, in contrast to the strong taboo in talking about it, presents a puzzling dichotomy to communicators, educators and counselors. In this society, new ways of communicating some personal messages have become playful, creative and fun. Therefore, suggested a friend, why not spread the message as others do? How about a bumper sticker "Honk! If You Masturbate!"? Would this cause silence and shock? Or, perhaps, the noise of the responding horns might be a fitting, contemporary and affirmative orchestration for our own sexuality. Sex need not, nor should it, be always solemn. All affirmations of life build bulwarks against the life- and joy-destroying forces we daily live with.

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turned to the police if he had escaped after suspecting his hosts, the mass murderers Corrl and Henley.

The carrot in the armament is the message that our views of sexuality are somewhat of a piece, but the sexual world to which those laws refer is not of this day, it is not of the world that relates to personal optimization, or increased marital satisfaction, or better parenthood, or some human base for a better understanding in an age which daily seems colder and more mechanical.

The role that SIECUS has taken in enunciating and standing for the basic principles is important here. These principles encompass some of the most significant concerns which are involved with anachronistic laws as matters of fact rather than as matters of issue. The views as to sexual orientation, explicit sexual material and sex laws contained in the position statements constitute a challenge to the American sexual consciousness which would find wide support. If these positions can be kept to the fore, if they can be supplemented by a broad, positively presented program of sexual information, then sanity and public interest may prevail over an anachronistic puritanism. Our day may see the end of those immoral morality laws.

*William P. Brown, Ph.D.*

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effects of premarital intercourse, information availability, benign effect of several partners, and community attitudes. Effects of premarital coitus and information availability continued to be significantly related to guilt and to account for at least one per cent of the variance of sexual guilt when subjected to multiple regression analysis.

Sex information was negatively related to sexual guilt and was the fourth most potent predictor of sexual guilt in a multiple regression analysis. Sex information was positively related to overall sexual activity. This relationship did not reflect increasing promiscuity as sex information improved, but rather reflected subjects with high sex information scores as participating in more types of sexual activity, particularly oral-genital stimulation.

Higher sex information was significantly related to holding a more liberal position on attitude factors regarding non-marital sexual activity, the effect of having several sexual partners and the harshness with which sex offenders should be treated.

Greater present religious interest was found to be significantly related to holding a more conservative position on all attitude factors except the factor related to the harshness with which sex offenders should be punished.

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