

THE PREVENTION OF SEXUAL DISORDERS: A REVIEW

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The Prevention of Sexual Disorders: Issues and Approaches.

C. Brandon Qualls, John P. Wincze, and David H. Barlow, eds. New York: Plenum Publishing Corporation, 1978 (202 pp.; \$14.95).

"To the extent that any given group forms its identity in terms of its sexual functioning, controversy and polarization will result." "Prevention often means a reordering of societal values even at the level of individual behavior." Such powerful statements as these indicate the substantive base that Qualls, Wincze, and Barlow attempt to address. The result is a first-class job of editing pertinent and well-integrated contributions to produce one of the first (and therefore especially welcome) books to deal with issues and approaches in the *prevention* of sexual disorders. Yet the book ultimately left me frustrated. My unease seems to stem from many of the very attributes that make this a fine book—the issue of prevention here rarely seems to be grappled with. To reflect both enthusiasm and frustration, I will deal both with substantive issues of content and with issues of responsibility and accountability in writing about prevention.

The book is well organized. An exceptionally comprehensive overview by Qualls stands well on its own and both complements and telescopes the rest of the volume. It places research on American sexuality, values, and culture into historical perspective. His discussion of sexual dysfunction is to the point, and his generalized comments on prevention are contextually useful.

Issues he cites are followed up in greater detail elsewhere, and include the role of cultural values, the serious disorders involved in and stemming from cross-sex identity in children, sexual offenders and (tertiary) prevention strategies, sex education, pornography, and ethics. These are all relevant and high-priority issues in the field of human sexual behavior. Most valuably, however, Qualls raises a caveat—the difficulty in applying preventive measures to sexual disorders when the data on their natural history, prevalence, incidence, risk factors, and classification are not yet in. And even if they were, various moral, religious, and legal considerations, as deeply emotional as they are complex, would certainly add further dimensions to the point.

Nevertheless, a point of entry to the study and prevention of sexual disorders is designated in this volume, that of their cultural context. Joseph LoPiccolo and Julia Heiman, in skillfully developing negative themes of sexuality, include the one currently recognized as predominant, i.e., the tremendous cultural pressure to *perform*. Unfortunately, while their approach to the problem is bold, they do not venture into strategies, recommendations, or approaches to culturally preventive measures.

If cultural interventions are not readily feasible, why not then attend to the child who is both the malleable product and the future developer of cultural values? This Richard Green does excellently in his chapter on children with cross-sex identity. Describing how profound the conflict is for the transsexual at every point in the life cycle, Green aptly pegs it "the most basic contradiction between self-image and visible anatomy." He deals honestly with both the possibilities and the principles of intervention but, while refreshingly straightforward, that very honesty is also troublesome: "An assumption of the title of this book is that prevention is [original italics] possible with respect to the atypicalities of sexual identity. This assumption has not been proven at this time in the history of psychosexual research." Yet while accepting the "premise" that prevention is possible, he queries what should be prevented, and what might be the ramifications of such efforts for later development. Meanwhile, regarding the role of cultural values, he speaks of atypical sexual behavior and struggles toward development of an androgynous solution.

John Bancroft also pays heed to the present immaturity of the science of primary prevention, but in addition differentiates *counseling* from *social control* with respect to secondary prevention. Regarding the state of the art of sexual counseling, Bancroft stresses the ethical requirements involved in presently feasible methodologies. He warns strongly against the use of psychophysiological mechanisms to monitor sexual preference, suggesting that, if used at all, they should be adjunctive to an "otherwise trusting therapeutic relationship" that places greater reliance on social skills, shaping of fantasies, and the enhancement of self-control.

Paul Walker's introduction of the tertiary prevention theme flows well within the book. He deals with the role of antiandrogens in the treatment of sex offenders, and with the who, what, when, where, and how questions that recur throughout. He agrees with Bancroft that sexual assault is a behavior for which legal controls are appropriate and in that context comments interestingly on the issue of public nudity. He meticulously describes the medroxyprogesterone acetate (MPA) research program at the Johns Hopkins Hospital, directed by John Money. Despite the apparent effectiveness of this approach (still investigational and subject to FDA approval), Walker expresses a "bias" against either MPA or psychotherapy. In noting that recent psychiatric research has demonstrated the salutary effects of *combined* drug and psychosocial therapies in the treatment of mental disorders, he suggests that the sex offender's problem is most probably one of early conditioning that is relatively resistant to purely somatic approaches.

One means of preventing at least a facet of faulty early conditioning is suggested in Mary Calderone's chapter, "Is Sex Education Preventative?" She takes a broad perspective which stresses healthy sexuality as the goal of sex education. To those who would accuse school and other institutional sex education programs of promoting "sexually acting out behavior," she responds with such data as are available showing that some programs appear to have enhanced knowledge and contributed to the development of more liberal attitudes while simultaneously promoting more conservative, or responsible, sexual behavior. Calderone's discussion of the absolute necessity for adequate sex education by parents is encouraging, and her note of the need for positive attitudes regarding children's eroticism, including masturbation, is poignant.

To fill a void that might occur even in adequate and progressive sex education, W. Cody Wilson considers the value of "pornography" as a possible preventive approach to sexual disorders. (Here, I echo the editors' assessment that the chapter is controversial!) Defining pornography as explicit verbal or pictorial depictions of genitalia and sexuality that are sexually arousing for substantial segments of the population, Wilson points out that the principal sources of sexual dysfunction appear today to be lack of information and general anxiety about sex. If pornography can contribute to solving an inability between partners to communicate about sex, his argument goes, then let it.

Wilson cites Goldstein's 1973 study exploring the relationship between experience with pornography and the development of abnormal sexual behavior in adult life. The subjects classified *ex post facto* as "abnormal" were institutionalized sex offenders, rapists, and pedophiles at Atascadero State Hospital, noninstitutionalized male homosexuals, and transsexuals. Control "normal" subjects were randomly selected from the Los Angeles community. The finding of particular interest to Wilson was that the groups manifesting abnormal sexual behavior as adults reported having had less exposure to pornography during adolescence than did the comparison groups. These findings have been replicated. Nevertheless, I take exception to the argument. Nowhere does Wilson consider that the differences might be attributable to the design and reporting of the study. Nor does he consider the realistic possibility that a convicted sex offender might deny or minimize reported exposure to pornography merely because of his awareness of societal attitudes, con-

sequently trying to make responses closer to his perception of the social norm.

Although Wilson does comment on some weaknesses of the cited studies, he summarizes, "Nevertheless, we may conclude on the basis of these several findings that it is a relatively valid empirical fact that adult males who manifest 'deviant' sexual behavior, such as rape, pedophilia, homosexuality, and transsexualism, have had less experience with pornography in adolescence than have comparison groups who manifest more 'normal' sexual behavior." This is not adequately supported by the text. Despite an offhand acknowledgement of the danger of confusing correlation with causation, the fact remains that sweeping generalizations do not gain credibility through some double-negative process of basing them on invalid data. Perhaps pornography does play a role in sexual education and healthier sexual behavior; the presentation in this chapter, however, defies the credibility of this hypothesis.

The final chapter by Robert C. Kolodny is on the ethical issues that must be taken into account when attempting to link preventive efforts to sexual problems. As I have indicated, this is certainly not the first consideration of ethical issues in the volume—each of the contributors proves sensitive to the need—but its comprehensive discussion and tidy summation merit comment.

Kolodny believes no evidence exists that liberalization of cultural values to permit any nonharmful sexual behavior between mutually consenting adults will prevent sexual dysfunction; he does agree, however, that there would be a legal impact. With the first part of his statement I disagree. Since anxiety is one of the basic components of sexual dysfunction, I would argue that liberalizing cultural values so that the norm becomes caring, sharing, and loving instead of

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SPEAKING OUT

On Mary Calderone's 75th Birthday

The occasion this month of Mary S. Calderone's 75th birthday gives us, her friends and colleagues, the opportunity to salute her.

The number of her admirers and supporters has grown astronomically since she first spoke out with wisdom, courage, and foresight over 15 years ago when she cofounded SIECUS, with the message that human sexuality is a primary life concern. Those were the days when medical schools stuck to basic biology, when most clergy discussed sex in terms of abstinence, when social workers were not yet trained to discuss sex with their clients, and when educators were generally forbidden to deal with "that topic." She stood up alone, but she began to awaken us.

Five years later when she was accused of being the leader of a "conspiracy to demoralize youth," she continued to stand up for what she knew was right, and we began to stand with her.

And today, when we tell her that she should be very proud of what she has done toward raising the consciousness of millions of people throughout the world, she reminds us that there is still so much to do: ". . . just look at the thousands of cancer patients whose medical professionals ignore the sexual aspects of their illnesses; the hundreds of thousands of preadolescents who need accurate information about sex before a good percentage of them become pregnant adolescents; the millions of elderly people who are denied their sexuality by their caretakers." She does not rest on her laurels and she will not let us rest either.

We have all been influenced by her spoken and written words. She has encouraged so many of us in our work, tying us into the ever-widening network of people who are promoting healthy human sexuality. We are all better people for having participated with her in this important work, and each of us is a fuller person for having known her. But also, we are



Mary S. Calderone, MD (Wide World Photos)

all proud activists in the organization which, thanks to her example, not only can look back with a sense of satisfaction, but more important, now looks ahead with confidence and enthusiasm for the work which is still to be done.

Fifteen years ago she stood alone. Today we all stand with her, in admiration, and with love.

Lorna Brown, on behalf of the Board
of Directors and Staff of SIECUS

DO YOU KNOW THAT...

Special SIECUS Celebrations

On Thursday, November 29, 1979, SIECUS will officially celebrate its 15th anniversary and the 75th birthday of its cofounder, Mary S. Calderone, with a gala dinner at the St. Regis Sheraton Hotel in New York City. Friends and associates from all over the world will be invited to share in this significant event. For further information, write to Renée Nankin, Administrative Assistant, SIECUS, 84 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10011.

SIECUS Report, July 1979

Childhood and Sexuality

The University of Quebec at Montreal, through its Department of Sexology and in collaboration with the Association of Sexologists of Quebec, is organizing a symposium, "Childhood and Sexuality," to be held on September 7-9, 1979, at the Montreal campus. Participants will be grouped according to three major themes: knowledge of the "normal" child's sexuality; knowledge of the difficulties, conflicts, pathologies, and therapies of the child's sexuality and eroticism patterns; and knowledge of the pedagogical and educational experiments on child sexuality. For further information, write to: Childhood and Sexuality Symposium, Department of Sexology, University of Quebec at Montreal, P.O. Box 918, Branch "A," Montreal, Quebec H3C 2V8.

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demanding skillful performance in the absence of practice, would go a long way toward the prevention of sexual dysfunction. However, Kolodny feels in turn that the moral permissiveness required of such a shift might increase social pressures so as in some instances to lead to sexual coercion between individuals and to conflicts with religious teachings. We can certainly see this today in the inability of many adolescents to stand up against the pressure of their peers to enter into full sexual activity. So I agree that there might well be an increase in anxiety during the process of value change, particularly if that change is narrowly understood to include the goal of becoming a superskilled performer in the arena of erotic expression.

But Kolodny also challenges the qualifying phrase "as long as no one is hurt." Even in a narrow interpretation involving only adults participating in mutually agreeable sexual activity, he feels we have some difficulty in our ability to predict in advance that the sexual encounter will not cause harm in one way or another. I think such a stance is the equivalent of saying "I don't want to cross the street for fear of being killed." Obviously there are risks in crossing streets, and each person has a choice. In the broader interpretation of his conditional phrase, Kolodny also feels there is an unmeasurable risk that another (third) person will be hurt in this situation, perhaps unintentionally, through rejection, jealousy, or embarrassment. Again, I disagree. If the norm I suggested is to come to be, there would be no embarrassment, rejection, or jealousy about a way of life that was broadly accepted.

Moreover, when Kolodny addresses the question of changing cultural values or norms, I believe he confuses two issues: changing the norms of sexuality, and indoctrination to conform with norms. If change were toward more tolerance and a wider range of sexuality, the result would be less anxiety and no threat to or loss of personal identity. While I do agree with Kolodny that members of the health care community ought not to impose an arbitrary value system on people's lives, on the other hand knowledgeable mental health professionals do possess skills more tuned to making empirical decisions than do moral philosophers. The core of the problem is in the interweaving of ethics and empiricism. Kolodny sums up the dilemma by proposing guidelines: prevention programs must be based on secure data; the dignity of the individual must be preserved; benefits must outweigh risks; peer review mechanisms must be employed.

If these are the only approaches to be taken, then the issues and approaches discussed throughout the volume are, in the end, the sources of my frustration. For as Qualls points out in the introduction, and as Kolodny does suggest at the end, preventive *concepts* have been around for a long time and have been applied to many other different issues, but with sexual dysfunctions the *how* still eludes us, and "issues and approaches" are now insufficient. What have we learned from other areas, and what specifically can we be bold enough to apply to the broad range of sexual disorders? I propose that we are now at a point where authors must be held accountable to tackle this question of *how*, no matter how eternally difficult and complex it appears. The book valuably brings us exactly to this point of confrontation. **PR**

DO YOU KNOW THAT...

SIECUS at Macy's

The kickoff session of R. H. Macy's special "Teens Today" series, "Getting Intimate: Dating and You," was held April 23-28, 1979, in the Special Events Center of Macy's Herald Square store, in cooperation with the Hunter College Center for Lifelong Learning. The informal program—conducted by Michael Carrera, EdD, chairperson of the SIECUS Board; Susan Fox Ziff, MA, SIECUS information officer; and Peggy McHugh, MD, a pediatrician from The Door Center of Alternatives, a New York teen health clinic—was built around teenagers' questions concerning sexual relationships.

Resources to Write for . . .

Educational and Training Opportunities in Sexology, researched and edited by David A. Shore, MSW, is a resource manual containing information about programs offering graduate degrees in fields pertaining to sexology (MS, EdD, DHS, PhD); programs concerned with sex education, sex therapy, sex counseling, and sex research; and continuing education programs in human sexuality areas. Although not all-inclusive, it is nevertheless useful as a beginning resource. Published by the Playboy Foundation, it is available for \$3 from David A. Shore, 1525 East 53rd Street, Suite 1102A, Chicago, IL 60615.

Who Cares? A Handbook on Sex Education and Counseling Services for Disabled People, a tab-indexed, loose-leaf-bound 1979 publication of the Sex and Disability Project at George Washington University, is a unique, outstanding, and comprehensive resource in this vital area of concern. Topics include: myths, attitudes, and rights; the need for sexuality services; settings; who should provide the services; training needs and options; accessibility; counseling and education; training; and making policy. The appendices include survey and literature summaries, service and training programs, consultants and organizations, books and journals, audio-visual and tactile resources, and bibliographies. Copies are available at cost (not yet specified) from: RRRI-ALLB, George Washington University, 1828 L Street NW, Suite 704, Washington, DC 20036.

Gay Books Bulletin, edited by Wayne Dynes and published by the New York chapter of the Gay Academic Union, is a new quarterly concentrating on critical reviews of both gay-related fiction and nonfiction. To subscribe (\$10 per year, \$15 for institutions), write to GAU-NY, Box 480, Lenox Hill Station, New York, NY 10021.

Teensex? It's okay to say NO WAY, a recent Planned Parenthood Federation of America pamphlet (11 pages) written for young people who have not yet become sexually active, encourages them to analyze their individual needs and values before making sexual decisions and to resist peer pressure tactics. Single copies are 25¢ from Planned Parenthood Federation of America, 810 Seventh Avenue, New York, NY 10019.

AUDIO-VISUAL REVIEWS

NEW A-V RESOURCES ON PREGNANCY AND BIRTH

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

Pregnant Fathers. 16 mm, color, 28 min. Joseph T. Angalone Foundation, P.O. Box 5206, Santa Cruz, CA 95063. Price, \$325; rental, \$35.

This much-needed film serves to balance the natural emphasis on the mother during pregnancy and birth. The basic themes stressed are: that fathers need support during the pregnancy period just as mothers do; that fathers have the potential to be as nurturant as mothers; and that fathers are not irrelevant or insignificant in the lives of their babies. A father is depicted in his relationship with his wife and young son, and in his participation in preparatory classes with other expectant parents where a number of men express their views about their roles as fathers. The camera then records the actual birth and its impact on the father. Overall, the film "role-models" an involved male participation in knowledgeable, physical, and emotional preparation for birth and parenthood. It is appropriate not only as a birth film, but also as a commentary on the changing roles of men in our society today. While excellent for both sexes, it would be especially helpful for adolescent and young adult males.

Have a Healthy Baby: Labor and Delivery. 16 mm, color, 29 min. Churchill Films, 662 North Robertson Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90069.

This film follows two couples through the experience of labor and birth. It is an unusual film in that while it is obviously a teaching film, with animation sequences clearly explaining the physiology and process of birth, it is by no means an exclusively intellectualized presentation. The love and understanding in the relationship of each couple come across strongly and viewers are caught up in the shared experience. Both husbands are totally

involved in every aspect of the birth process. The cinéma vérité approach enables us to be present during encounters with hospital staff (most are cooperative and supportive), and to share the feelings and expectations of each couple as the moment of birth approaches. One delivery is difficult, and this is honestly presented. The other mother has a normal delivery, and the film focuses on the beauty and miracle of this couple's birth experience. The tension, the humor, the apprehension and pain, and finally the joy are beautifully captured. As a film combining authoritative information with emotional impact, this one will be hard to beat. A two-page discussion guide is also available.

Newborn. 16 mm, color, 28 min. Filmmakers Film Library, 290 West End Avenue, New York, NY 10023. Price, \$400; rental, \$40.

This film presents the findings of Dr. Berry Brazelton's research and investigation of newborn behavior. The film demonstrates the resources infants have from birth for protection from disturbing light, sound, and unwanted tactile stimulation. Experimental situations demonstrate how babies perceive and can control their own environments. Electrical-response tests clearly indicate specific reactions to color, shape, and taste, and experiments leave no doubt about the infant's ability to distinguish the mother's voice from the voices of others. The almost constant contact between infant and mother in primitive cultures as she performs all her tasks with her baby cradled on her back is dramatically contrasted with our culture's patterns that can isolate parents from their newborn in many ways beginning immediately after birth. The importance of the first week of life in establishing individual patterns of waking, sleeping, basic responses, and ways of adapting to parents, is stressed. The film is basically reassuring, particularly to first-time parents, about the newborn's ability to cope with life outside the womb. Fathers, however, are almost nonexistent in the film, and it would be too easy to interpret the film as saying that

fathers are irrelevant. Alerted in advance to this sexist bias, students, prospective parents, and new parents will find this a fascinating presentation.

Emotional Aspects of Pregnancy. 16 mm, 8 mm, or video cassette, color, 20 min. Perennial Education, Inc., P.O. Box 855, Ravinia, Highland Park, IL 60035.

In contrast to the documentary technique used with other films on birth, this is an acted presentation, thereby allowing for carefully scripted coverage of specific points. In a teaching film this approach outweighs the moments of artificiality that are often part of such dramatized situations. We meet two expectant couples and one expectant single mother. Black, Caucasian, and Hispanic races are depicted. In a straightforward but sensitive way, the film deals with the doubts and conflicts both partners must cope with: the expectant mothers' feelings about their changing body image, the impact on sexual needs, the intensity and rapidity of change in moods, the fears that the baby may not be normal, and the changes in the marital relationship that can result after parenthood. Some of the expectant fathers' concerns are dealt with, but the narrator's remark that basically there is "little for the father to do but be protective and understanding" is unfortunate. The leader's guide does suggest that fathers can participate by fixing up space for the baby and "helping to select a name." Audiences might benefit from this film if it were shown in tandem with *Pregnant Fathers*.

SOCIAL ISSUES IN SEXUALITY

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

Frequently, and with increasing intensity, the media today confront us—and our classes, groups, churches, or constituents—with social issues relat-

ing to sexuality. Some of the films reviewed in this issue deal with one or more of such highly provocative topics as prostitution, incest, homosexual marriages, and the aging in our society.

Ain't Nobody's Business But My Own. 16 mm, color, 54 min. Mountain Moving Picture Company, Box 1952, Evergreen, CO 80439. Price, \$450; rental, \$75.

Made by an all-woman crew with a grant from the American Film Institute, this documentary on female prostitution is an award winner, and rightly so. The film stimulates fresh and thoughtful consideration of this social issue by presenting it in very human terms. It is difficult to hold on to stereotyped views of prostitutes as one watches and listens to a "girl-next-door" type of young woman discuss her life with her parents and with her young daughter. Or to a middle-aged "fisherwoman," married and with children, who devotes one afternoon a week to massage and prostitution. Or to a musician who is involved in prostitution to survive while trying to establish her career in music. A balanced presentation introduces us to women of varying ages, of different races and creeds, whose expressed feelings about their work range from embarrassment and shame to pride and satisfaction. In addition to a sequence covering the First World Meeting of Prostitutes, in Washington, D.C., and a march on the White House, there is also a very articulate discussion of prostitution by Margo St. James, founder and chairmadam of COYOTE (Call Off Your Old Tired Ethics), the national organization of prostitutes. The film confronts traditional views of prostitution with sensitivity, never blatantly. It is an excellent stimulant for discussion of sexual mores, sex roles, and the role of sex in our society.

Incest: The Victim Nobody Believes. 16 mm, color, 21 min. G. Gary Mitchell Film Company, 200 Bridgeway, Sausalito, CA 94965.

A recent spate of books on the subject has begun to bring incest out of the closet, and this film will be a worthwhile addition to resources that call attention to this as one form of sexual misuse/abuse. Three women very openly share their experiences of growing up in a household where their

fathers were their first sexual partners. All three are articulate women who convey the confusion, isolation, and guilt they struggled with in childhood and adolescence, how it affected their feelings about their mothers and their brothers and sisters, and how eventually they were able to halt the relationship. While the circumstances in each situation were different and individual reactions varied, the women were united in emphasizing that earlier knowledge about the fact of incest would have helped them cope and would have made their long years of silence unnecessary. Their obviously healthy adjustment will be reassuring to others struggling to resolve similar experiences. It can also alert educators about the need to be sensitive to the possibility that such situations are far more widespread than is usually appreciated.

Mixed Marriages. 16 mm, color, 13 min. Carousel Films, Inc., 1501 Broadway, New York, NY 10036. Price, \$225; rental, \$25.

This documentary is a segment from the CBS "60 Minutes" series, and deals with a different kind of mixed marriage: that of a "straight" (heterosexual) woman and a "gay" (homosexual) male. A number of films are available that present homosexual relationships—between homosexuals; this is the first to explore marriages between partners with differing sexual orientations. Two such couples are interviewed by Mike Wallace (in Great Britain, since it was not possible to obtain the cooperation of similar couples in the U.S.). One situation reveals the trauma experienced by the wife after discovering her husband to be gay, and this couple has separated. The second couple consider themselves to be still happily married after a brief period of shock for the wife. The husband's lover is welcome in the couple's home and enjoys an affectionate relationship with their children. The founder of a self-help group of women currently or previously married to homosexual husbands is also interviewed. Some of the reasons why these men marry heterosexually (i.e., as cover for business reasons, to have children, sincere love for wife) are brought out. While Wallace is sometimes a hostile interviewer, and the dialogue makes no distinction between

homosexual and bisexual males, it is nevertheless a provocative film which ought to stimulate spirited and, hopefully, informative rather than polemical discussion.

Aging and Sexuality: A Physiological Approach. 54 slides, audio cassette, color, 11½ min. The Gerontology Program, University of Nebraska at Omaha, P.O. Box 688, Omaha, NE 68101. Price, \$50; rental, \$15.

This slide-cassette program developed by M. Diane Estes presents the human sexual response cycle in males and females over 60 years of age, as described by Masters and Johnson. The narration by both female and male voices is accompanied by diagrams and random photographs of an older couple in nonexplicit situations not always ideally consonant with the spoken commentary. For those with little or no knowledge of the effects of aging on sexual response, however, this is a good, straightforward review of the facts, concisely and positively presented.

FROM THE SIECUS CATALOG

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DO YOU KNOW THAT...

Journal Review Policy Revised

Beginning with this issue of the *SIECUS Report*, reviews of articles in individual issues of human sexuality journals, once a regular feature, are being eliminated. In their stead, an overview and annotated listing of all of the currently available journals in the field of human sexuality will be published once each year. In addition, from time to time special-topic issues of the various professional journals will be reviewed when they concentrate on sexuality concerns. Readers are requested to inform the editors of any such prospective issues.

Resources to Write for . . .

Legal Aspects of Transsexualism 1979 by Joanne M. Clark is a 36-page source booklet containing up-to-date information on legal matters concerning transsexuals. Topics include the armed services, civil rights, criminal and family law, health care, identification, veterans' benefits, and vocational rehabilitation. Copies are available for \$5 each through Renaissance, P.O. Box 2476, Mission Viejo, CA 92690.

The Sexual Spectrum, a strikingly effective 29- by 21-inch poster designed by Deryck Calderwood and Mark Schoen, has a twofold function—for use as an art piece and also as an educational resource to provoke discussion. On a background of sky blue in a rainbow of five colors from the spectrum are the words "Human Sexuality," "Heterosexuality," "Bisexuality," "Homosexuality," and "Human Sexuality." Dramatic in its simplicity of design, this poster is accompanied by a sheet of suggestions for use with groups concerned with understanding the total range of human sexual expression. It costs \$5 (prepayment, includes postage and handling) and is available from David Steven Enterprises, P.O. Box 199, Bayside, NY 11361.

BOOK REVIEWS

Embodiment: An Approach to Sexuality and Christian Theology. James B. Nelson. Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1978 (302 pp.; \$8.95).

Reviewed by Anthony Kosnik, STD, JCB, Professor of Ethics, Saints Cyril and Methodius Seminary, Orchard Lake, Michigan; Chairperson, Human Sexuality Report of the Catholic Theological Society of America.

James B. Nelson's *Embodiment* represents a major contribution to the growing body of literature concerned both ethically and theologically with the meaning of human sexuality. The author has addressed his task with a thoroughness and comprehensiveness perhaps unmatched in any other single work on the subject and, while his conclusions are sure to be contested in some quarters, his courage and directness in facing even the most difficult questions compel thoughtful admiration.

The book is an attempt to integrate the best in current theological, psychological, and sociological research on human sexuality with a particular focus on the ethical dimension. The topics are thoroughly researched, opposing opinions are fairly presented, and the reader is carefully led through a dialectical process of comparison and contrast to the author's conclusion. Extensive footnote references provide additional direction for readers seeking further information. The author has a gift for presenting his material in a clear, simple style that is a delight to read. This turns what might have been a dull, cumbersome study, understandable only to the professional, into a fascinating adventure of discovery and enlightenment for any discerning reader.

There is no question that many Christians, particularly those from a fundamentalist tradition, will find the author's insights, interpretations, and conclusions disturbing. Even those who consider themselves more open and middle of the road will find their

views seriously challenged. The author's ethical perspective might be described as primarily that of a Christian personalist with appropriate respect for principle, rule, and context as important factors in influencing individual decisions. The ultimate ethical objective appears to be the wholeness of the human person which the author repeatedly insists cannot be reduced to concrete categorical absolutes, universally valid for all. This basic ethical perspective and the author's appreciation of the uniqueness of the individual allow for a great deal of flexibility in reaching judgments about the morality of sexual behavior.

The author begins his work by stating his basic assumptions and carefully distinguishing between sex and sexuality. "Sex is a biologically-based need which is oriented not only toward procreation, but, indeed, toward pleasure and tension release. . . . Sexuality, on the other hand, is a much more comprehensive term associated with more diffuse and symbolic meanings, psychological and cultural orientations. . . . Sexuality is a sign, a symbol, and a means of our call to communication and communion. . . . More fundamentally, it is who we are as body-selves who experience the emotional, cognitive, physical, and spiritual need for intimate communion—human and divine."

This primarily relational understanding of sexuality colors the author's approach and conclusions throughout the work. The procreative dimension of sexuality receives minimal consideration. By thus subordinating the procreational aspect, Dr. Nelson neatly avoids—perhaps too neatly—the theological dilemma that lies at the root of the traditional formulations of the Christian teaching on sexuality. Dr. Nelson's stance here is a crucial one. It separates him from the traditional conviction that the procreative and unitive dimensions are morally inseparable. His primarily relational understanding of sexuality enables him to reach con-

clusions that constitute quite a departure for many a Christian. A more direct confrontation of the differences at this point might have rendered his subsequent conclusions more acceptable.

A second important characteristic in Nelson's moral methodology is what he terms the "symbolic interactionism" approach. This principle maintains that from a moral perspective sexuality ought to be viewed as "patterns of meaning which are more socially constructed than biologically determined." This eliminates any absolute intrinsic meaning for sexual expression and allows for a wide range of meanings for the same sexual act, both among different people and even within the same individual. Thus a great deal more emphasis is placed on culture, context, and intention in the determination of the morality of sexual behavior.

A brief but interesting synopsis and analysis of the historical evolution of the Christian tradition on sexuality attributes the sexual alienation it has produced to the "spiritualist" and "sexist" dualism that characterized this development. Spiritualistic dualism or "angelism" negated the wholeness of the body, separating reason from emotions and "higher life" from "fleshly life." Sexual dualism with its man-over-woman perspective, institutionalized in various societal structures for centuries, subordinated and depersonalized women in a manner utterly contradictory to the relational meaning of sexuality.

The chapter on "Sexual Salvation" with its positive view on the sexuality of Christ and its understanding of justification as God's acceptance of our bodily life is refreshingly original. The implication of this for our own self-acceptance, sensuousness, and recognition of the feminine-masculine polarity within each of us points the way to a better appreciation of our relationship to self, to others, and to God.

In the chapter on "Love and Sexual Ethics," Nelson provides some important consideration about the meaning

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.

of love and an excellent summary of the various elements in decision making. He likewise calls attention to different styles of decision making that give varying emphasis to these individual components. Throughout, his attitude is one of respect for the diversity of various approaches, and for the individualness of responsibility in arriving at and acting on sexual decisions. He recommends three general principles as appropriate Christian norms for sexual expression: (1) "Love requires a single standard and not a double standard for sexual morality." The same ethical principles ought to apply for men and women, married and unmarried, heterosexual and homosexual, young and old, able-bodied and infirm. (2) "The physical expression of one's sexuality with another person ought to be appropriate to the level of loving commitment present in that relationship." (3) "Genital sexual expression should be evaluated in regard to motivations, intentions, the nature of the act itself, and the consequences of the act, each of these informed and shaped by love."

These general norms flow naturally from the author's personalist approach to morality and relational understanding of sexuality. Some will contend that, although these are valid principles, they are not very helpful. The real test comes in how one interprets and applies these general principles to specific concrete expressions of sexual behavior. Nelson's inclination is to regard specific sexual rules or norms as important and necessary but not as exceptionless. The rules deserve a strong presumption in their favor and are especially helpful in protecting us at the boundaries of our experience where we encounter our limitations in knowledge or wholeness. Those who would claim exception to the rule bear the burden of the proof that their actions will be nonetheless growth producing and wholesome.

Undoubtedly, Nelson challenges his readers most in Chapters 6 through 9 where he applies his theology to the particular questions of marital fidelity, sexual variations, homosexuality, and the sexually disenfranchised. He clearly favors the rule of marital genital exclusivity but argues that it is a presumptive rule that may give way in exceptional cases to a sexual sharing that realistically promises to enhance interpersonal fidelity and personal

wholeness. He offers some helpful insights into the positive values of sexual fantasy, erotic and pornographic literature, masturbation, oral-genital sexual expression, and anal intercourse. His argumentation is well documented and consistent with his emphasis on the symbolic meanings of sexual expressions as crucial to their moral evaluation. Sadomasochism appears to be the one form of sexual expression that offers little possibility of being personally transforming and enriching. Nelson recognizes in principle that motivation, intention, and the nature of the act are important factors to be considered, but his moral evaluation of these specific forms seems to rely heavily on an analysis of consequences as indicated by empirical data. It is not altogether clear how the nature of the act enters the moral judgment except by way of consequences. Nelson takes a particularly strong stance when he asserts that he came to believe that "nothing less than full Christian acceptance of homosexuality and of its responsible genital expression adequately represents the direction of both gospel and contemporary research." Although there are a growing number of authors who share this view, it would seem more accurate to classify this still as a minority direction at the present time even among the serious scholars and scientists. While there is no doubt that past presumptions and prejudices regarding homosexuality are being dispelled and rejected, many questions still remain and more research and reflection will be needed to give firm footing to this new direction.

Nelson's exposure of society's insensitivity to the sexual needs of the physically disabled, seriously ill, aging, and mentally retarded deserves special commendation. His advocacy of their rights, and his appeal for dispelling some of the widespread myths and repressive institutional policies regarding the sexually disenfranchised need to become part of the Christian agenda for spreading the compassion and justice embodied in the life of Christ himself.

Woven throughout the work (and one of its greatest contributions to the theological dialogue on sexuality) is Nelson's keen awareness of the profound sociological implications of human sexuality. In the final chapter on "The Church as Sexual Community," he calls explicit attention to the effect

of our sexual understanding and attitude on our experience of God, our religious affirmation, our worship, our communal life, and our pursuit of social justice. To illustrate his point he draws in greater detail the connection between our sexual attitudes and social violence, racism, and ecological dilemmas. His insights here will come as a surprise to many but they are far too serious to be taken lightly or ignored.

Nelson's *Embodiment* is a singularly important contribution to the ongoing dialogue in the Christian community on the theological meaning of human sexuality. His scholarly research, careful argumentation, and forceful articulation of some daring new insights and directions create a serious challenge for Christians to rethink some old positions and to become sensitive to some entirely new questions. Believers who take their faith and sexuality seriously dare not ignore the challenge. A

Sex-Related Cognitive Differences: An Essay on Theory and Evidence. Julia A. Sherman. Springfield, Ill.: Charles C Thomas, 1978 (269 pp.; \$16.25 hardcover, \$12.25 paper).

Reviewed by John Money, PhD, Professor of Medical Psychology and Associate Professor of Pediatrics, and William R. Cameron, PhD, Clinical Research Fellow; The Johns Hopkins University and Hospital, Baltimore, Maryland.

The philosopher, Alfred North Whitehead, in his 1925 Lowell Lectures, *Science and the Modern World*, wrote: "There will be some fundamental assumptions which adherents of all the various systems within the epoch unconsciously presuppose. Such assumptions appear so obvious that people do not know what they are assuming because no other way of putting things has ever occurred to them."

Whitehead's dictum applies with uncanny accuracy to the way in which we in our civilization perpetuate a millennial tradition that emphasizes and is obsessed with sex *difference* as though it constitutes an eternal verity to the total exclusion of sex *similarity*. Our very language reinforces the tradition, and will doubtless continue to do so, despite author Sherman's espousal of the sexless personal pronouns, tey, tem, ter, as the third person singular of they, them, their.

Along with everyone else, psychologists continue to perpetuate the tradition of emphasizing sex difference rather than similarity by the way they approach sex difference in cognition. It is their heedlessness of similarity to which Julia Sherman addresses herself in *Sex-Related Cognitive Differences*.

So difficult is it, however, to avoid being entrapped by an assumption, that Sherman herself perpetuates the outmoded assumption of body-mind dualism. She does so by juxtaposing biological determinants against what she conceptualizes as the determinants of the "bent twig" (not defined but obviously pertaining to social determinants as discussed in Chapter 7).

Many psychologists do, indeed, theorize about social determinants as if assuming that social learning takes place in a spiritual, psychic, or astral body, whereas, of course, it actually takes place in a *brain* that is housed in a human *body*. They fail to take into account that there is a biology of learning and memory, just as there is a biology of genetics, endocrinology, puberty, and maturation. It is precisely this failure that can force Sherman's argument to yield all too easily the power and authority it deserves in the presence of tendentious dispute about the innate versus the acquired.

This criticism does not apply to Sherman's valid delineation of the prevalent shortcomings of experimenter bias in research design, sample selection, and statistical attention to variance in studies of cognitive sex difference. The author also validly identifies a lack of investigative concern for multivariate design and analysis—to which may be added that multivariate determinants occur often in developmental sequence (see below). Sherman warns that the absolute magnitude of sex difference may be trivial and inconsequential even where it is statistically significant, thus eventually being quoted as though of great magnitude. For women, the implication of the difference is all too often pejorative.

Sherman examines and disputes much of the literature on sex-related difference in verbal reasoning, verbal precocity, visual-spatial perception, mathematics, and analytical skill in problem solving. Then she brings under scrutiny the currently fashionable theories of the origin of sex-related differences in cognition: the theory of

greater male variability, the X-linked genetic hypothesis, the notion that gout and genius are male linked, hormonal theories, and the newest fad, the brain-lateralization theory.

The author makes too many provably erroneous statements to list, but such scholarly lapses aside, her conclusions are, in broad outline, valid. The theories of sex-related cognitive differences that the author identifies as biological are, in fact, either discredited, unprovable, misconstrued, or equally applicable to males and females although with differing prevalence.

To attack on an enemy's own battleground and terms is not necessarily good strategy. By analogy, it also is not necessarily good strategy to attack a theory of sex-related cognitive differences by attacking the phenomena on which it is based. It is more effective to attack the assumptions from which the theory derives.

Traditionally, the assumption regarding all sex differences is univariate. That is to say, sex difference is a global rather than a specific genital and procreative phenomenon; and all its manifestations are unitary in origin, ostensibly stemming from the same biological endowment.

The alternative or multivariate assumption is that there are four categories of sex difference: (1) *sex-irreducible*, nonnegotiable procreative differences; (2) *sex-derived* differences, those chiefly hormone mediated such as stature and physique, or urinary posture; (3) *sex-adjunctive* differences, such as domestic preparation of family food versus long-distance roaming and occupational mobility; (4) *sex-arbitrary* differences, as in personal ornamentation.

The multivariate assumption does not permit one to assign a phenomenological sex difference a priori to any one of the four categories. There must be empirical documentation to justify its placement, and this documentation should pertain to the developmental origin of the difference in question. There is a great deficiency of such documentation in the present state of knowledge, which often makes it impossible, in particular instances, to distinguish sex-derived from sex-adjunctive differences. Take, for instance, the phenomenon of mathematical reasoning. There is today no way of reaching a definitive decision as to whether more boys than girls rank high

in mathematical achievement because of some sex-derived endowment in the nondominant (right) hemisphere of the brain, or because mathematics has long been defined as suited to sex-adjunctive (if not purely sex-arbitrary) careers for males, the practice of which, during critical or "sensitive" periods of development, strongly and irreversibly lateralizes mathematics in their nondominant right hemispheres. This example can be multiplied, on and on.

It is better to admit ignorance than to claim knowledge as an imposter. The only certainty of differences between the sexes is that men impregnate, whereas women menstruate, gestate, give birth, and lactate—and even this generalization is confounded in cases of intersex. All other sexually dimorphic phenomena are actually sex shared. Their dimorphism lies in the threshold for their development or release. Rigid sex stereotyping is thus a form of cultural dictatorship, and especially so in matters of cognitive sex difference. It is already known that, by today's criteria, some men are more like women than they are like the general run of other men, and some women are less like other women than they are like some men.

In a cultural democracy, there is a place for all variations, and for equality of opportunity regardless of sex—or at least there should be. This is the call to arms sounded in *Sex-Related Cognitive Differences*. While the book is not strong in its suggested solutions, it is effective in posing the questions of sex difference. It provokes. It stimulates. It irritates. It will make students think. It gives them a bonus of 54 pages of annotated bibliography which fortunately overshadows its utterly skimpy index. It is a good text for seminars and workshop discussions, and for library reference shelves. **PR**

Human Sex and Sexuality. Edwin B. Steen and James H. Price. New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1977 (338 pp.; \$11.95).

Reviewed by Haskell R. Coplin, PhD, Professor of Psychology, Amherst College, Amherst, Mass.

For those who teach courses in human sexuality a wide array of textbooks is available (cf. this reviewer's brief summary of 15 texts and books of readings

in the *SIECUS Report*, Vol. VI, No. 1, September 1977). This one is a compact but comprehensive coverage of the fundamentals, with particular emphasis on the biological perspective. In fact, the strength of the book lies in its excellent coverage of the biology of sex: sexual reproduction, sex response, sexual dysfunctions and disorders, birth control, sterilization, abortion, and the pathology of sex. Carefully compiled appendices increase the text's usefulness: sources of information, special and general references, and a superb 50-page dictionary of sexual terms. (Did you know that "contraction" is another word for "fore-play"?)

The biological perspective of the book leads the authors to "take sides" in a number of areas which are not yet resolved for many sexologists. Thus, the authors assert that "the predominant view at the present is that homosexuality is an emotional disturbance resulting primarily from disturbed relations between a child and his parents during early developmental years." Their earlier, introductory statement—"There is no agreement as to whether homosexuality should be considered as a mental disorder, a social deviation, or simply as an alternate type of sexual behavior"—is properly both more objective and more appropriate in this type of book.

This text should be a leading candidate for use in those courses (at both high school and college level) requiring a text which presents a brief but intensive overview of the facts of sexuality. When used in conjunction with selected readings to augment its relatively sparse coverage of sociological and anthropological materials, this one could prove to be a wise choice. **LT, A, PR**

Sex Education for the Health Professional: A Curriculum Guide. Norman Rosenzweig and F. Paul Pearsall, eds. New York: Grune and Stratton, 1978 (336 pp.; \$19.00).

Reviewed by Daniel H. Labby, MD, Professor of Psychiatry and Medicine, Department of Psychiatry, University of Oregon Health Sciences Center, Portland, Ore.

"The field of human sexuality may well be one avenue for drawing the profession together in mutual educational

and clinical efforts. If we can do so cautiously but with constant effort to improve through innovation, scientifically but never without humanness and sensitivity, then we as professionals may be better able to travel with our patients, rather than around or at them." This quote is from the last paragraph of this intelligent book, one of the successful series of *Seminars in Psychiatry* edited by Milton Greenblatt. The editors of this volume on sex education, Rosenzweig and Pearsall from Sinai Hospital in Detroit, with the contributions of 28 colleagues representing medicine, psychiatry, psychology, theology, education, public health, and a wide variety of disciplines within the mental health field, have come up with a tightly edited book that is conceptually sound and highly informative, thanks to its broad coverage from historical perspective to here-and-now practicalities. The reader is thus exposed to a diversification in points of view about both the subject matter and the teaching styles required for presentation of such material to a wide variety of audiences. The manuscript is organized into six different parts, each supplied with an introduction written by the two editors who provide rationale and perspective.

Part I is devoted to "Developing a Pedagogical Approach to Sex Education for the Professional." The first chapter, by Dr. Mary Calderone, could hardly be improved upon in its historical grasp blending her view of the cultural, political, and social history of the evolution of our social attitudes and how they have or have not permitted education in this area to develop. Her highly readable and informed contribution, organized as "Hindsight," "Insight," and "Foresight," is written with her characteristic clarity and vigor. It is followed by a chapter by Harold Lief, whose pioneer work of over 20 years in sex education in medicine is reflected in his historical treatment of and current views on issues concerning attitudes, skills, and sex knowledge. All of this is applied to the teaching of medical students, residents, and physicians, within the framework of curriculum design and techniques for evaluating teaching effectiveness.

An intriguing chapter by California Assemblyman John Vasconellos, who was instrumental in designing the historic 1976 California legislation mandating special sex education for profes-

sional health workers, recounts his experiences in making specific recommendations to the medical profession. Procedures for implementing this legislation are outlined by Vasconellos and Douglas Wallace, then director of the human sexuality program at the University of California Medical School in San Francisco.

Part II, "Designing a Curriculum in Human Sexuality," broadly considers the conditioning factors that are strong determinants of the acceptability of such a curriculum—for instance, the need to begin where the student is rather than where the student may be expected to be. Discussion is focused on some of the successful methods in attitude restructuring, "sensitization-desensitization," and seriously considers how teaching methodology can be made to blend with course content. Hard, realistic matters that require emphasis and elaboration with special audiences are also considered, such as the impact of venereal disease and the need for the physicians to have a firm understanding of the nature and the scope of sexually transmissible diseases. This reviewer was especially attracted to Chapter 6, "Teaching about the Sexually Transmissible Diseases" by Michael S. Aronoff, from which one gets the impression that he himself has indeed lived through and experienced the difficulties of attempting to transmit this material to a wide variety of audiences, while focusing his sensitivities on the importance of the discretion in the doctor-patient relationship, the use of appropriate language level for communication, and the factors that influence the interaction between audience and instructor. The skill of Theodore M. Cole in his chapter on "Teaching for Professionals in the Sexuality of the Physically Disabled" is keenly evident in his detailed discussion. Paul Gebhard contributes an intriguing consideration of comparative anthropology in sexuality curricula.

Part III, "Teaching Methodology for Curricula on Human Sexuality," reemphasizes the need for teaching methods that will avoid mere presentation of factual material by recognizing and dealing with the emotional biases and resistances of both students and teachers. Discussions include: the use of groups to focus on the human, universal, and personal aspects of sexuality; the use of audio-visual material in a straightforward, personalized ap-

proach; and a chapter on "The Design and Use of Assessment Instruments and Procedures for Sexuality Curricula" by Ann Marie Williams and William R. Miller of the research staff of the Department of Psychiatry, University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine.

Part IV, "Human Sexuality Courses for Special Target Audiences," provides opportunity for considering the special needs of groups as various as psychiatric residents, gynecologists, urologists, and the professionals involved in physical and occupational therapy. The chapter written by George Szasz contains some excellent case examples of how the physiotherapist or occupational therapist can be drawn into discussions of sex-related problems with their patients. E. I. Hanson's "Sexuality Curriculum and the Nurse," which contains excellent conceptual material significant for nursing practice, is well illustrated by case material presented in a course on the nursing care of persons with cardiovascular illness.

In Part V, sample programs are described, reflecting the work of many of the original pioneer trend setters as well as of more recent workers in the field. The human sexuality education programs of major institutes, universities, and hospitals across the country are discussed, including the program developed by the editors of the book at Sinai Hospital in Detroit. The final section is a rich appendix that provides guidance in the acquisition and use of audiovisual aids in sexuality curricula. A workable 8-page index is also included. Since this book presents a diversity of high-quality material from a multitude of subspecial fields in education and sexuality, it should prove highly useful to all providers in the field. **PR**

Listen To Us! The Children's Express Report. Dorriet Kavanaugh, ed. New York: Workman Publishing, 1978 (255 pp.; \$5.95).

Reviewed by Mary S. Calderone, MD, President of SIECUS.

If you want to know how children honestly feel about sex, parents, siblings, happiness, and a lot of other subjects, this is the book for you. The work of over 2000 children ages 13 and under and their 40 teenage assistant editors

(ages 14-17), it is the end product of over 15,000 pages of transcript from over 400 tapes. As one of the editors noted: "It's not a psychologist's report, not people giving their opinions about how kids think. It's kids really talking and sharing their experiences."

You'll laugh but you'll also cry as you read the astonishingly insightful poetry, and the candid, perceptive discussions. You will also get a real sense of how children feel about the lack of information they can trust. This unique publication should be a handbook for everyone concerned with "The Year of the Child." It is a great addition to real-life literature. Listen to them. **C, ET, LT, A, P, PR**

Now What? Bill Hutchinson. Miami: Center for Dialog of Dade County, Inc., 1977 (106 pp.; \$3.50).

Reviewed by William H. Genné, MA, BD, Coordinator of Educational Services, Montclair Counseling Center, Montclair, N.J.; member, SIECUS Board of Directors.

Described as "a practical and personal guide to the subject of homosexuality, written especially for the parent who knows or assumes a son or daughter to be gay," this book will also be of value to anyone desiring a greater understanding of homosexuality and the intrafamily dynamics which homosexuality necessarily engenders. The text is interspersed with chapters contributed by parents, homosexual sons and daughters, a clinical psychologist, an Episcopal bishop, and a member of the Florida legislature.

Beginning with a variety of initial reactions to the revelation of a child's same-sex preference, the book goes on to describe the various parents' process of adjustment to this knowledge. In addition, the reader is provided with a background of the recent developments in our scientific and cultural thinking about homosexual behavior. The chapters by the bishop and the clinical psychologist provide a good account of the changes in religious and medical thought about this area of concern.

The tendency toward parental guilt feelings is fully explored. One chapter presents a complete list of the questions (with answers) usually asked by parents, and many books for further reading are recommended. The chap-

ter by the legislator gives a basic introduction to the possible legal ramifications and sources of help involved.

The recurring theme is that the sexual orientation of a person is but one aspect of his or her total personality. The acceptance of the *total* person is a prime requirement for a constructive, continuing relationship, with the second requirement being to keep communication open. Several parents testified to growth and adjustment periods ranging from 5 to 10 years.

Written in a warm, direct, and personal style, the book carries a wealth of sound information. Although the absence of a table of contents and index does make its use awkward, on the whole it is a valuable resource for people who are conscientiously trying to sort out their ideas, feelings, and opinions about homosexuality. Even if they are not themselves personally involved, they may have friends who are, to whom their own informed attitudes can be helpful. **A, P**

Sex without Shame: Encouraging the Child's Healthy Sexual Development. Alayne Yates. New York: William Morrow and Co., Inc., 1978 (224 pp.; \$7.95).

Reviewed by Sharon Shapiro, MA, PhD candidate and internresident, Institute for Advanced Study of Human Sexuality, San Francisco, California.

Written in a sex-positive manner, this book deals with the inevitable controversy which arises when children are defined as sexual and sensual beings. Infants of both sexes are capable of certain elementary sexual responses and can experience some sexual pleasure. Yet in our modern Western civilization children are not given the permission or the right to enjoy their sexuality. Recognizing that adult sexual difficulties often stem from childhood traumas and inhibitions, and also that many adults unconsciously communicate sexual anxiety and shame to their children, the author offers "concrete ways to encourage and enhance children's eroticism, to make them whole and healthy children . . . and adults."

While the case studies presented in Part I are interesting, some conclusions drawn seem unrealistic and unsupported. For example, "If David had had reassurance, encouragement, and permission to engage in sex play, therapy would have been unneces-

sary." While growing up in a sex-positive environment may, and probably does, help children avoid sexual hang-ups, data are not available proving that this guarantees a sexually well-adjusted adult. The eight chapters of Part II discuss how parents can aid in the sexual development of their children, and suggest approaches and activities specifically designed to encourage the development of eroticism in the child. Here again supporting data, vital for such a controversial approach, are lacking.

Childhood sexuality, if acknowledged, could play a vital part in the whole drama of creating a sex-positive society with a minimal amount of adult sexual dysfunctions. *Sex without Shame* highlights many of the issues involved in such a process and could thus be useful for both educators and parents. **A, P, PR**

Sexual Consequences of Disability.

Alex Comfort, ed. Philadelphia: George F. Stickley Co., 1978 (304 pp.; \$24.50 hardcover, \$17 paper).

Reviewed by Joan L. Bardach, PhD, Director, Psychological Services, and Professor of Clinical Rehabilitation Medicine (Psychology), New York University Medical Center; and Sanders W. Davis, MD, Associate Professor of Clinical Rehabilitation Medicine, New York University Medical Center.

There can be no doubt that information about the sexual consequences of disability is much needed by the medical profession and by all others who work with persons who have experienced either a transient or a permanent physical impairment which in turn has affected their ability to function sexually in their usual or preferred fashion. This book represents an excellent start in dealing not only with such problems accompanying diseases commonly seen in medical practice, but also with diseases and disabilities less commonly seen but which can have particularly devastating effects on the perception of sexual competence by patients, and by the physicians, nurses, and occupational and physical therapists who serve them.

As is so often true with volumes drawing on multiple authorship, some chapters are stronger than others, but most are direct, to the point, presenting information in a form that makes it

directly useful in patient instruction. More important, most of the chapters leave no doubt that the physician's responsibility concerning sexual function extends far beyond the mere communication of data. There is frequent emphasis on the use of a team approach which could function without diluting the central patient-physician relationship and which would permit taking advantage of different team members' temperaments, training, and time, while allowing the patient or family member to choose the person(s) with whom they could most comfortably discuss such personal issues.

Especially valuable are the chapters concerning sexual problems of both the arthritic and the stroke patient. The psychosexual aspects of gynecological and prostatic surgical procedures are well explored, though in the latter more might have been said concerning the management of the psychosexual consequences. In other areas the scope is perhaps too narrow. For example, the discussion of sexual impotence in men with multiple sclerosis could very appropriately have been expanded to include other kinds of sexual dysfunction. The chapters on sexual functioning and diabetes and on sexuality and heart disease, while disjointed, contain some excellent observations and principles.

A number of authors rightly stress the importance of the premorbid history, including the sexual history, a thorough understanding of the present situation of the patient, the importance of reviewing medications the patient is taking, the necessity of involving the sexual partner(s), and where appropriate, careful preparation of all individuals significant to anyone facing any radical medical procedure that might affect sexual function.

On the distinctly negative side is that the sexual consequences of a number of widespread difficulties, such as muscular dystrophy, have been omitted. In light of these omissions it is hard to justify two chapters on arthritis and three on women who have had mastectomies. Also the use of sexist language by many of these supposedly sexually aware authors, not caught and blue-penciled by the editor, is shocking. The paperback edition, although not inexpensive, is so poorly bound that several pages have already loosened. More stringent editing could have eliminated those chapters which

duplicate advice that could have been handled in an introduction. One cannot help but speculate that the book may have been too hastily compiled for a timely market.

In spite of the above defects, this is a useful reference book for professional persons faced with the responsibility of sexual counseling of individuals having medical conditions that can alter their usual patterns for obtaining sexual satisfaction. **PR**

How to Live Better after 60. Ruth K. Witkin and Robert J. Nissen, eds. Port Washington, N.Y.: Regency Press, 1978 (280 pp.; \$9.95).

Reviewed by Anne Backman, MA, SIECUS Publications Officer.

Subtitled "A guide to Money, Health, and Happiness," this book answers almost every question an older person might ask and gives a lot of sound, helpful advice on such things as handling finances, keeping fit, choosing living arrangements, and enriching leisure time.

The section on "How to Maintain Your Sex Life" is very well done—concise, honest, and reassuring. The concluding paragraph states: "More, perhaps, than for the young, the warmth and intimacy of a good sex life is especially rewarding in the golden years. It can add zest to life when it is most needed and valued. It can be one of the greatest pleasures of maturity."

The final chapter is in the form of a resource and information directory, listing state, regional, and federal offices concerned with aging, and Senior Citizen organizations across the country. In addition, each of the preceding chapters contains lists of pertinent resource materials.

The format is excellent—8½" by 11" pages, large type, with unobtrusive but effective illustrations. The writing throughout is easy to read, direct, and refreshingly "jargonless." The book is not sold through bookstores, but is available only by mail order from Regency Press, 32 Ridge Drive, Port Washington, NY 11050.

It is obvious that a great deal of careful and thorough research was involved in the preparation of this guide. It is recommended not only for all those already involved in the over-60 marathon but also for anyone approaching the starting line. **A**

Understanding Gay Relatives and Friends. Clinton R. Jones. New York: The Seabury Press, 1978 (133 pp.; \$3.95).

Reviewed by James B. Nelson, PhD, Professor of Christian Ethics, United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities, New Brighton, Minn.

This sensitive and eminently useful book is written by an Episcopal priest who has had a distinguished counseling (and writing) ministry with specialization in the area of human sexuality. Nine of the 11 chapters deal with persons who are basically homosexual in orientation—a gay son, daughter, brother, sister, husband, wife, father, teacher, and minister. Each chapter opens with a letter by a gay person to loved ones (most of the letters were actually written by Canon Jones's counselees, although several were composed by him on the basis of his counseling experience). Each letter, in itself a compelling, revealing entry into the pains, struggles, and longing of a gay person to be fully affirmed, is followed by the author's description and analysis of both problems and possibilities in the interpersonal relations of gay people and their families, friends, in work

settings and society.

Interlaced throughout these chapters is a variety of important empirical facts about gayness, seasoned human observations, and insightful psychological and theological reflections. The reader will learn, for example, things about the history of the gay movement, about the striking varieties in gay lifestyles, about typical forms of gay anger and self-doubt in an oppressive social climate, about the pains involved in a forced double life, and about the ways in which religious attitudes can both destroy and heal. Regarding more specific situations, Jones includes a wealth of particular insights into psychosexual dynamics, concerning such things as the reasons many gays marry, lesbian threats to the male ego, particular problems faced by the opposite-sex parent of a gay child, etc. And in every chapter Jones effectively debunks the common myths about gayness, myths which complicate and threaten personal relationships.

In the final two chapters the author leaves homosexuality to deal with transvestism and transsexualism. While he takes steps to distinguish these phenomena from that of gayness, his inclusion of them in the book could

inadvertently contribute toward perpetuating the all-too-common confusion which incorrectly lumps them together. Nevertheless, these are valuable chapters. The one on transsexualism is especially informative. That on transvestism would be more satisfying had more attention been given not only to the psychodynamics of the adult male's urge to cross-dress but also to ways in which transvestite activity might actually be constructively incorporated into a marriage.

Returning to the main theme, if the problems of gay/nongay relationships are realistically described, the accent of the book is nevertheless a hopeful one, focusing upon the genuine possibilities for human fulfillment when nongay relatives and friends can understand and accept the gay person and affirm the homosexual orientation as right for him or her. The message comes through again and again: the only thing we have to fear is fear itself. But since the fears are still so widespread and deep, this is a needed book. And because it is written with such genuine human caring, and written in interesting, nontechnical prose, it is a book to recommend to anyone dealing with these issues. **A, P, PR**

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