

# SEXOLOGY *An Authoritative Guide to Sex Education*

## KINSEY ON SEX RESPONSE IN CHILDREN

"MANY a child who knows nothing about (sex) reproduction, or about the differences between the male and the female, has developed definite attitudes and responses toward sex at the age of two or three." says Dr. Alfred Kinsey, famous sexologist and director of the Institute of Sex Research at Indiana University. Many interesting discoveries about sex reactions in young children were reported by Dr. Kinsey recently before an assembly of the Federation of Jewish Philanthropies in New York. He particularly noted that—"parents are more interested in the adjustment of their children to marriage than in their own marital adjustment."

Studies made by Dr. Kinsey and his staff on sex reactions in several hundred children under the age of five reveal that by the time an average boy or girl is two to three years old, their future *personality adjustment* (for marriage) has already been seriously influenced; that is, so far as parental guidance and psychological training factors are concerned. Says Dr. Kinsey—"When more than a few months elapse without suitable training (sex education), you have lost some of your valuable opportunities. By two or three years (of age) the basic influences have been laid. By the middle teens, the ultimate adjustment to marriage has been developed."

Children are far more difficult to study in relation to sex reactions than older people; but some interesting and surprising results have been obtained. The youngsters are asked simple questions about sex and boy-girl relations by parents, teachers and scientists while engaged in games and sports. From the answers, certain conclusions can be drawn. Very young children (two to three years old) have shown that they are capable of having sex responses of a similar nature to those experienced by adults. Stranger still is the discovery that it is possible for tiny infants only two to three months old to respond to sex stimulation in the same manner as that experienced by older children. Experiments with young children of various ages of child sex-reactions have shown similar results. "From Sigmund Freud's theories about sexual responses in infants we have come to recognize the importance of what happens to very young children." said Dr. Kinsey. His research on early sex activity confirms Freud's views on child sex behavior.

The marital reactions of the individual (when he or she reaches adulthood) often are a reflection of the affection and general emotional relationship between mother and child during babyhood. If the baby was uninhibited when cuddled by its mother (or father) and responded likewise in a spontaneous manner, this unrestrained healthy attitude could, quite conceivably, persist through the years of childhood into the adult marriage stage.

When the formative early period is influenced by an unwholesome response between mother and child, the child may become tense and shy, with these patterns expressing themselves in some ways in later marital life. It is premature to state permanent conclusions as yet, but it is clear that the earlier the parents start sex education, the more chance they will have to help their children develop adjusted personalities and wholesome attitudes toward sexual behavior.

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# Sexes

## Attacking the Last Taboo

Researchers are lobbying against the ban on incest

Sex researchers love to shock the public. Trouble is, the public is becoming more and more difficult to shock, and researchers are running out of myths to attack. Perhaps that accounts for the latest—and what may be the most reprehensible yet—trend in the field: well-known researchers and a few allies in academe are conducting a campaign to undermine the strongest and most universal of sexual proscriptions, the taboo against incest.

Most of the chipping away at the taboo is still cautious and limited. Says John Money of Johns Hopkins, one of the best-known sex researchers in the nation: "A childhood sexual experience, such as being the partner of a relative or of an older person, need not necessarily affect the child adversely." Money and Co-Author Gertrude Williams complain in their forthcoming book *Traumatic Abuse and Neglect of Children* about the public attitude that "no matter how benign, any adult-child interaction that may be construed as even remotely sexual, qualifies, a priori, as traumatic and abusive." One who commits incest, say the authors, is like "a religious deviant in a one-religion society"—thus neatly planting the notion that opposition to incest is quite like religious intolerance.

Wardell Pomeroy, co-author of the original Kinsey reports on males and females, is far more blunt. "It is time to admit that incest need not be a perversion or a symptom of mental illness," he says. "Incest between ... children and adults ... can sometimes be beneficial." Indeed the new pro-incest literature is filled with the stupefying idea that opposition to incest reflects an uptight resistance to easy affection and warmth among family members. Writes Anthropologist Sevmour Parker of the University of Utah cautiously: "It is questionable if the cost\* (of the incest taboo) in guilt and tinea; -distancing between intimates are necessary or desirable. What are the benefits of linking a mist of discomfort to the spontaneous warmth of the affectionate kiss and touch between family members?"

The SIECUS Report, the publication of the Sex Information and Education Council of the United States and an unfailing indicator of fads and fashions in the sex research world, published a major article attacking the incest taboo. Though the journal's editor, Marv Calderone, and her colleagues ran an ingenuous editorial denying that the article was advocating any-

thing, the piece in fact depicted the taboo as a mindless prejudice. Wrote the author, James W. Ramey: "We are roughly in the same position today regarding incest as we were a hundred years ago with respect to our fears of masturbation." Ramey, a researcher who has worked with many of the leading sex investigators, says the incest taboo owes something to "a peculiarly American problem—the withdrawal of all touching contact." With a little more touching in the home, he thinks, the nation might not be facing "the



Jill Clayburgh embraces Matthew Barry in the film *Urns* *More an object of pity than one of outrage.*

present rash of feverish adolescent sexual activity outside the home."

As in any propaganda campaign, the words and terms used to describe incest are beginning to change. The phrase "child abuse" is distinguished from "consensual incest" involving a parent, and "abusive incest" is different from "positive incest." Some try to give the argument a bit of serious academic coloration, ransacking anthropological literature for a tribe or two that allows incest, or arguing that the incest taboo is dying of its own irrelevance. Rutgers Anthropologist Yehudi Cohen offers a simplified pseudo-historical argument: the taboo is a holdover of a primitive

need to form personal alliances and trade agreements beyond the family. Since that is no longer necessary, he says, "human history suggests that the incest taboo may indeed be obsolete." Joan Nelson, a Californian who holds an M.A. in psychology from Antioch, has a special interest in the subject. She has launched the Institute for the Study of Sexual Behavior, and has passed out questionnaires looking for "good or bad" incestuous experiences.

For whatever reason, public interest in incest as a subject seems to have increased. Hollywood provides a good index; one survey shows there were six movies about incest in the 1920s, 79 in the '60s. The numbers are still growing. Recent films on the subject include *Chinatown*, *Luna* and the made-for-TV *Flesh and Blood*. But probing a sensitive subject for better understanding is one thing, and justifying incest is quite another.

• • How did the lobby against the taboo come about? One strain of its philosophy springs from the fringes of the children's rights movement, which insists that small children be granted all the rights of adults. Some have taken that to mean the right to be sexually active with any partner at all. Says Larry Constantine, an assistant clinical professor in psychiatry at Tufts, one such self-styled sexual radical: "Children have the right to express themselves sexually, even with members of their own family."

But most of the pro-incest thought rises logically enough from the premises of the sex-research establishment: all forms of consensual sexuality are good, or at least neutral; problems arise not from sex, but from guilt, fear and repression. That kind of faith is bound to lead its believers in crusades against all sexual prohibitions, including incest.

Traditional academics have tended to look down on sex researchers as pushy, ham-handed amateurs, and the arguments for incest will do little to change that view. The literature shows absolutely no attention to psychological realities: that often an adolescent and surely a small child can hardly produce anything like informed consent to an adult it depends on for life and guidance; or that the lifting of the incest barrier would invite the routine exploitation of children by disturbed parents. The sex researchers may get the shocked public reaction they expect, but their arguments are truly too simple-minded to earn it. Critic Benjamin DeMott, professor of English at Amherst, feels that outrage is not the proper response to what might be called the pro-incest lobby. Says he: "These voices cry out loudest for pity." - goJhi &er

# Sexes

## Cradle-to-Grave Intimacy

Some researchers openly argue that "anything goes" for children

•ff"he preachings of sexologists on child- hood hav; not chang :d In decades: sex education In the schools is good; guilt, repression and panishment for masturbation are bad. Now, how- ( ver. a disturbing idea is gamin: currency' vi' hin'thc sex es- ^OTsK?ncnT've "yj^oan^ z\_uldren should be aUowe?p: ncr^Thap .t ncouraged, to con^ucTa iuD s^xUe~wiLio jt intr.crence from parents ind the law

The^idcalrrrarely pre:enied directly— most of the rei-e^rchers. dxtors and counselors who believe it hav; Jie wit to keep a low profJe and Ucl: the idea away neatly in a longer, riorc conventional speech or artic.c. The suggestion comes wrapped u the.pieties of feminism Children, like women, have~mc""ngg to contra ~Jheir "own JydesT ancl the childrr\*s 'rights movement ^children hav: rights vs. QTeir parents). According o the argument, children arc sexual wrings who need to develop skills early m life. The child has a fundamirta] right, says Marvjjj. C-alderone. Lead of the iru^ue'ntialSex~LriforTnaiio:i ind Education Council cf the U-S., 'to know about sexuality and to £\*s:.,\ual."

In general, these sexob.dsts consider freud's "latency i<riod"—a time of low sexual interest: r >m about age four to pubcr.y—to be Ttyth imposed by a prudish society. Some of the sexologists are fond cf pointing out that the becy's sexua response system begins early—infar I boys get erections and ihe vaginas >f infant girls lubricate. Apparent!// the researchers believe that su:a things constitute a^>o^erful argi-ne.ni\_foj' childjej. Even stranger is he theory that children will grow- up askew if

they do not have early sex. It\$ Sexologist John Mono of Johns Hopkins wrote in *ine Sc mces* mag; .ine: "It is almost certain thM human brings, like the other primates, require a period of early sexual rehearsal play." Ancihcr refrain is that sexual liberation canno. be withheld from the young. ' Western s:cietiy has undergone a revohiion in sexual values but has tried to apply it exclusiv: ly to adults." Anthropologist Jljchard Cu:ner wrote m *human BehaviC* "and thx ratner arbitrary restriction simply nc: working."

One of the more intellectually disheveled of the new apostles o' child sex is Family Therapis: Larry\_C nsuntine of Acton, Mass.. vs-tosc views sounB like a satire on how lo raise child en. Says he: "Children really ;ire a discnf anchored minority. They sho. Id have ih • right to express themselves sexually, •hich means that they may o' may noi lave contact

with people older than themselves." What about older men preying on four- and five-year-olds? Constantine would argue thai if children were properly educated about sex, a child who did net want sex could always say no.

-Almost all sexologists publicly suit- that they oppose adult-child sex. but \* number of researchers maintain that such sex is basically harmless lo the child. Norwegian Psychologist Thorc Langfejdt says thai early sexual stimulation of children,



A Piccirt Book of Sex tor Children and Parents Photography ancl Carrions by Will McBriJe F.xpi.untoPk'X-xc bvDr. Heicu FbxhiuuvT-HarJc

Cover of the controversial children's book *Show Me!*

including the masturbation of infants by adultis~in some"pnjrutjvc juTtures. ""den- nite~ly~~3oes not seemj.o\_harm ihe child.\* "MSjBclaims thai a youngster's "rehearsal play" with adults "affects them benea- cially." VVardeil Pomeroy, co-author of the original Kinsey reports, says incest "can someiimes be Jxnericiarjo chil3ren." DufchTpsychologist Frits Bernard, author of numerous articles and books on pedophilia, says adult-child sex is basically innocent and adds that the children he has studied "are not more neurotic than the average Dutchman." One conventional argument is that the fuss raised by parents after adult-child sex—and net the sex it- self—is what harms the child.

Another common theme is that adult- child sex must be judged by the quality of ihe relationship involved. Sociologist

Floyd Martinson of Minnesota's Custavus Adolphus College thinks 3adults involved in affectionate sexual relationships with lots should not go to jail. "Intimate human relations are important and precious," he feels. "I'd like to see as few restrictions placed on them as possible.\*\* Psychologist Douglas Powell of the Harvard Health Service says: "I have not seen anyone harmed by this so long as it occurs in a relationship with somebody who reall> cares about ihe child."

The fact that such views fall just short of a\_rnarJiesto for chilj\_molesters""jb is hot lost on pedophiles VaTToa DavTlaof the^C^cTrlood^ensualHy Circle. a far-oul sex group uTSrTDitja welcomes the new writing: "We believe cK2c"ren~sh6urd\_j>c- gfnTexal pirtn". ireausesa lot'oTpro&~ i- lcms not to practice incest/ Peao prule^oupTriavc"learned to pick up the rhetoric of the sexologists and children's rights advocates. David Thorstad, a homosexual, and militant spokesman for thepedqpKiliac move- ment,^says he js .fighting for""trie rights of children to control their own" bodies." Replies Nancy WaDcerra" lesbian columnist: "Let Thorstad and his confreres at least say what the real issue is: that they want lo [copulate with) children. Prepubesceat children are not taboo because this is a sex-negative society, but because they can be physically hurt and may be psychologically injured as well by sexual intimacy with adults."

Unfortunately, few responsible ! child experts have reacted even that bluntly so far to the radical writing on child sex. One who has is Child Psychiatrist Leon Eisenberg of Children's Hospital Medical Center, Boston: "Premature sexual behavior among children in this society almost always leads to psychological difficulties because you have a child acting out behavior for which he is noi cognitively or emotionalLy ready." People who ithink small children are capable of making free decisions about sex with adults, he adds, "arc full of crap."

in the world of sexology, prestige usually comes from attacking taboos and repression, not from assessing the psychological damage of the ideas unleashed. And few sexologists are trained to assess such damage. Psychotherapist Sam Janus, author of a new bookThe^J^sxuh 'of Innocence, says that people who were seduced early in life "go through the motions of living and may seem all right, but they"are damaged. I see ihese rxople year after year in therapy." U.C.L.A. Psychiatrist Edward\_Ritvo also saysjhat\_much 9f h5s\_work is wjth children who have been involved in catastrophic sexual situations. His conclusion: "Childhood sexjjajjtv is like playing with aldad&d gun." — ByJ&szn L Kmporf by lZvtfiM0hri9ns GoJvin/Boston