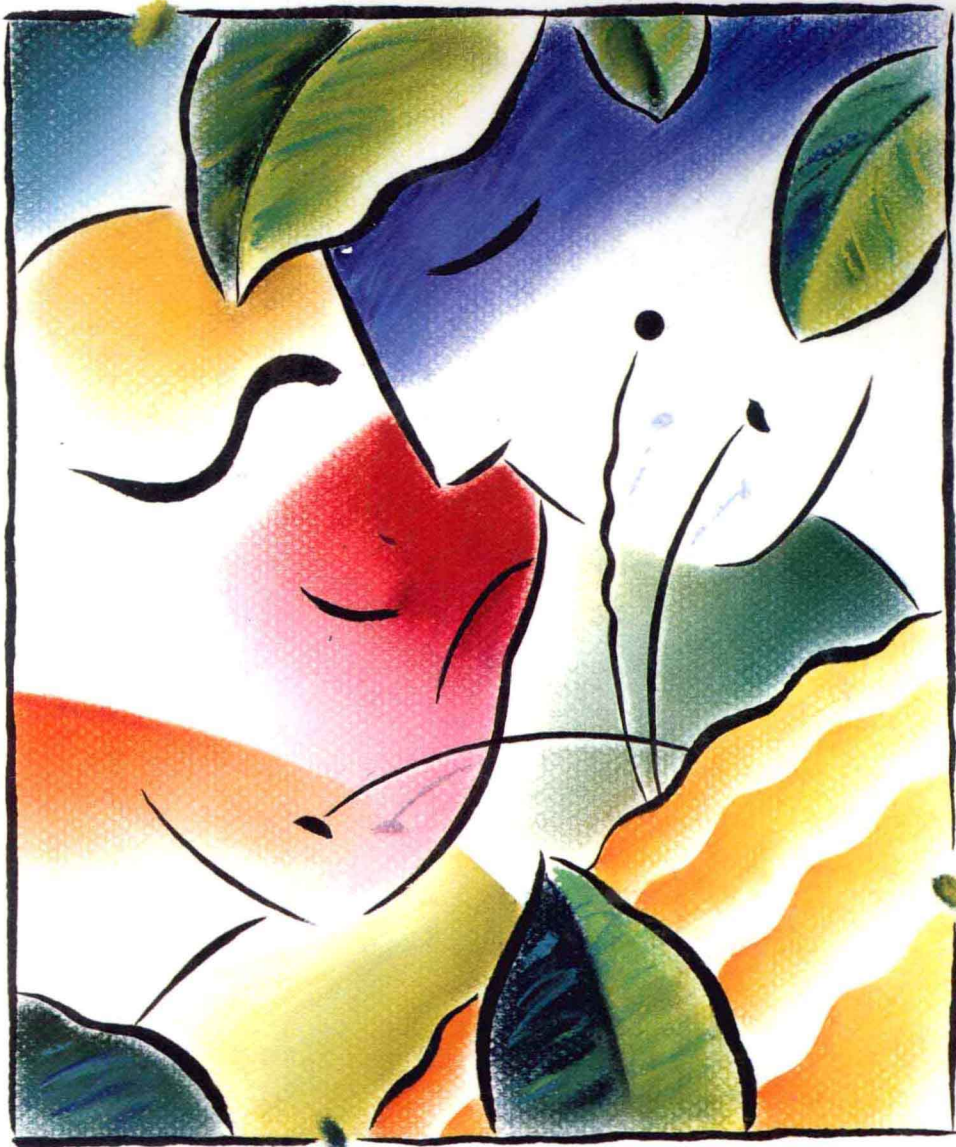


Essentials of
Human
Sexuality



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E S S E N T I A L S O F **U M A N S E X U A L I T Y**

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Preface

There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.

Hamlet, William Shakespeare

There are indeed more kinds of people in this world and more ways in which people experience their sexuality than most of us might imagine. Human sexuality may be intimately related to human biology, but it is embedded within the sociocultural fabric of human society. For this reason, a core theme of *Essentials of Human Sexuality* is its multicultural perspective. In this text, students learn to examine a broad view of sexual experience and the latest scientific findings in the field, and are encouraged to think about their own thoughts and perceptions about sexuality and sexual experience.

Essentials of Human Sexuality includes a built-in study system that is designed so that students may master difficult terms and fully understand key concepts. Each chapter ends with a carefully programmed, active review that contains unique prompts to help students prepare for class tests. The text is specifically designed to be accessible and useful, and, we hope, it will be compelling.

Themes of the Text

The four main themes that thread throughout *Essentials of Human Sexuality* are the rich diversity found in gender roles, sexual attitudes, and sexual behaviors and customs; critical thinking; making responsible sexual decisions; and sexual health.

Diversity

The majority of colleges and universities have as their mission to broaden students' perspectives so that they will appreciate and tolerate human diversity.

The United States is a nation of hundreds of different ethnic and religious groups, many of whom endorse culturally distinctive beliefs about appropriate gender roles for men and women and about sexual practices and customs.

Diversity is even greater within the global village of the world's more than 200 nations and each nation's distinctive subcultures. This text incorporates a multicultural, multiethnic perspective that reflects the diversity of sexual experience in our society and around the world and expands a student's understanding of the range of cultural differences in sexual attitudes and behavior. Discussion of diversity encourages respect for people holding distinctly diverse beliefs and attitudes. The book encourages students to question what is appropriate for women and men in terms of social roles and sexual conduct in light of cultural traditions and standards.

Critical Thinking

As we approach the new millennium, colleges and universities are encouraging students to become critical thinkers. Today's students are inundated with information about gender and sexuality so much so that it is difficult to sort out truth from fiction. Not only do politicians, theologians, and community leaders influence our gender- and sex-related attitudes and behaviors, but newspapers, television programs, and other media also brim with features about gender roles and issues concerning human sexuality.

Critical thinking means being skeptical of information that is presented in print or uttered by authority figures or celebrities. Critical thinking requires thoughtful analysis and probing the claims and arguments of others in light of evidence. Moreover, it requires a willingness to challenge conventional wisdom and common knowledge that many of us take for granted. It means scrutinizing definitions of terms and evaluating the premises or assumptions that underlie arguments.

"Thinking Critically About Human Sexuality" is addressed in a major section in Chapter 1. Throughout the book we continue to raise issues that demand critical thinking. These issues are intended to stimulate student interest in analyzing and evaluating their beliefs and attitudes toward gender roles and sexuality against accumulated scientific evidence.

Responsible Sexual Decision Making

Students are also encouraged to make responsible sexual decisions. There are psychological and physical dangers in “going with the flow” or being passive about one’s sexuality. We do not encourage students to be sexually active (such a decision is personal). On the other hand, we do encourage students to actively make their own sexual decisions on the basis of accurate information.

Decision making is deeply intertwined with our sexual experience. For example, we need to decide:

- Whom to date
- How and when to become sexually intimate
- Whether to practice contraception
- Which contraception methods to use
- How to protect ourselves against AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases

Throughout the book students are provided with the information they need to make responsible decisions about their physical health, the gender roles they will enact, sexual practices, birth control, and prevention of sexually transmitted diseases.

Sexual Health

The text emphasizes issues relating to sexual health. There is extensive coverage of such topics as HIV/AIDS and other STDs, innovations in contraception and reproductive technologies, breast cancer, menstrual distress, and diseases that affect the reproductive tract. The text encourages students to take an active role in health promotion. For example, it includes applications that will help students examine their breasts and testes for abnormalities, reduce the risk of HIV infection, and cope with menstrual discomfort.

Coverage

Essentials of Human Sexuality provides a comprehensive review of the latest scientific findings in the field. It helps students acquire a broader view of human sexual experience by examining multiple perspectives on human sexuality—historical, biological, psychological, cultural, and sociological.

The Core of the Text

The text covers topics relating to human sexuality including research methods, sexual anatomy and physiology, sexual arousal and behavior, gender roles, attraction and love, intimate relationships and communication, sex-

ual orientation, conception and contraception, prenatal development and childbirth, sexual behavior across the life span, sexual dysfunctions and sex therapy, sexually transmitted diseases, atypical variations in sexual behavior, sexual coercion, and commercial sex.

The text also emphasizes pressing issues that are likely to confront or concern today’s students. These include sexual harassment, date rape, interfaith couples, contraception, and the threat of AIDS.

Features

A World of Diversity

The feature A World of Diversity highlights the rich variety of human sexual customs and practices in our own society and around the world. Viewing human sexuality in a multicultural context helps students better understand how cultural beliefs, values, and attitudes can influence the expression of sexuality. Students may come to understand that their partners who may not share the same ethnic or religious heritages may feel differently than they do about sexual intimacy. Among many subject matters this feature includes are: “Around the World in 80 Ways—A Preview,” “*Machismo/Marianismo* Stereotypes and Hispanic Culture,” “Ritual Genital Mutilation,” and “‘Tis a Puzzlement: On AIDS and Prostitution in Thailand.”

Applications

Hands-on applications give students concrete advice for enhancing their sexual health and sexual experience. Useful information that is covered in this text includes “Breast Self-Examination,” “Preventing Rape,” “Preventing AIDS and Other Sexually Transmitted Diseases,” “Self-Examination of the Testes,” and “Talking to Your Children About Sex.”

Learning Aids

Perhaps more than anything else a textbook is a teaching tool—a device for presenting material in a way that stimulates learning and critical thinking. *Essentials of Human Sexuality* was designed to maximize this goal by means of such pedagogical aids as the following:

Chapter Outlines

Each chapter begins with an outline that organizes the subject matter for the student. Heads were created to be succinct and to promote student interest in the topics they address.

“Did You Know That . . . ?”

Every chapter begins with a series of queries regarding sexual knowledge preceded by “Did You Know That . . . ?” For instance, “Did you know that the graham cracker came into being as a means to help young men control their sexual appetites?” “Did you know that opposites do not usually attract—we are more likely to be attracted to people who share our views and tastes than to people who disagree with them?” And so on.

This feature lays the groundwork for basics within a chapter’s subject matter and at the same time erases some of the myths that have built up around the subject matter.

Running Glossary

Research shows that most students do not make use of glossaries in the endmatter of textbooks. Searching for the meaning of a term is often a cumbersome task and distracting, taking the reader away from the subject matter. This textbook has a running glossary—key terms are boldfaced within the text and defined in the margins where they appear. Meanings are immediately accessible and the reader can maintain concentration on the material.

Chapter Review (Interactive Summaries)

Chapter Review sections are, in effect, interactive summaries. They are carefully programmed to prompt students’ memories of the key points covered in each chapter. They

foster active learning by having students fill in missing information as they read. Prompts help students to complete the items.

Posttest with Answer Key

Most professors use multiple-choice questions in their assessment of student’s mastery of a subject. For this reason each chapter concludes with a multiple-choice test that allows students to check their knowledge following the Chapter Review. This unique study system is designed to help students acquire complex terms and fully understand key concepts.

Acknowledgments

The authors owe a great debt of gratitude to the many researchers and scholars whose contributions to the body of knowledge in the field of human sexuality is represented in these pages. Underscoring the interdisciplinary nature of the field, we have drawn upon the work of scholars in such fields as psychology, sociology, medicine, anthropology, theology, and philosophy, to name a few. We are also indebted to the many researchers who have generously allowed us to quote from their work and reprint tabular material representing their findings.

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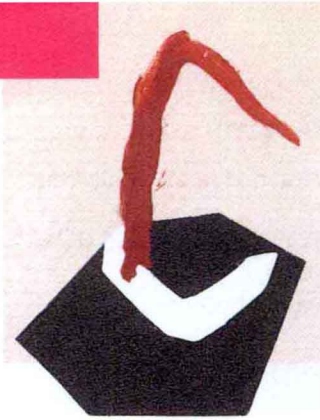
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CHAPTER 1

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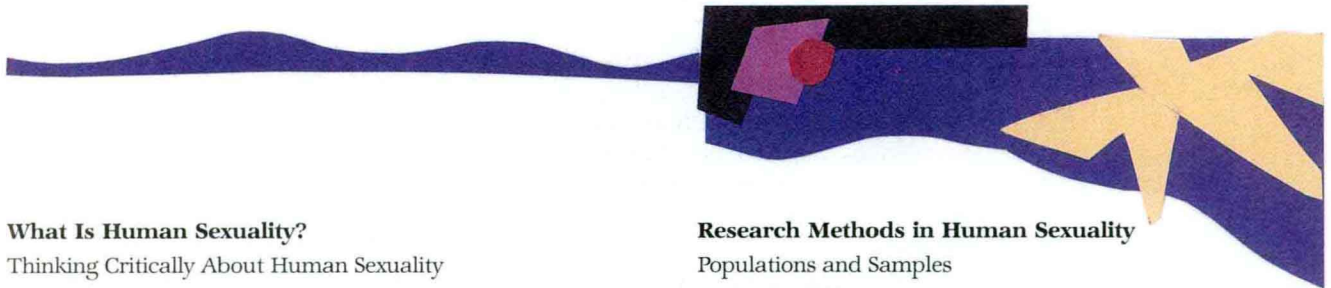
Methods of Observation

Chapter Review

Chapter Quiz

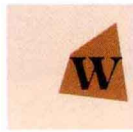
A World of Diversity

Around the World in Eighty Ways—A Preview



D I D Y O U K N O W T H A T . . .

- In ancient Greece, a mature man would take a sexual interest in an adolescent boy, often with the blessing of the boy's parents?
- The first illustrated sex manual was produced in China more than 2,000 years ago?
- The Hindus believed that sexual fulfillment was one way to become reincarnated at a higher level of existence?
- The graham cracker came into being as a means to help young men control their sexual appetites?
- You could study the sexual behavior of millions of Americans and still not obtain an accurate picture of the sexual behavior of the general U.S. population?
- Some sex researchers have engaged in "swinging" with the people they have studied?
- Masters and Johnson created a transparent artificial penis containing photographic equipment to study female sexual response?
- Regular churchgoers report higher levels of sexual satisfaction?



W e are about to embark on the study of human sexuality. But why, you may wonder, do we need to *study* human sexuality? Isn't sex something to *do* rather than to *talk about*? Isn't sex a natural function? Don't we learn what we need to know from personal experience or from our parents or our friends?

Yes, we can learn how our bodies respond to sexual stimulation—what turns us on and what turns us off—through personal experience. Personal experience teaches us little, however, about the biological processes that bring about sexual response and orgasm. Nor does experience inform us about the variations in sexual behavior that exist around the world, or in the neighborhood. Experience does not prepare us to recognize the signs of sexually transmitted diseases or to evaluate the risks of pregnancy. Nor does experience help us deal with most sexual problems or dysfunctions.

Concerns about AIDS and unwanted teenage pregnancies have focused greater attention today on the importance of sex education. Many children receive some form of sex education as early as elementary school. You may know more about human sexuality than your parents or grandparents did at your age, or do today. But how much do you really know? What, for example, happens inside your body when you are sexually stimulated? What causes erection or vaginal lubrication? How do our sexual responsiveness and interests change as we age? Why does the United States have the highest incidence of rape in the industrialized world?

These are just a few of the issues we will explore in this book. We also expect to debunk some common but erroneous ideas about sex that you may have picked up before you began this course. Before we proceed further, let us define our subject. ■

What Is Human Sexuality?

What *is* human sexuality? This is not a trick question. Consider the meaning, or rather meanings, of the word *sex*. One use of the term *sex*, then, refers to our **gender**, or state of being male or female. The word *sex* (or *sexual*) is also used to refer to anatomic structures, called sex (or sexual) organs, that play a role in reproduction or sexual pleasure. We may

Gender

One's personal, social, and legal status as male or female.

Coitus

(co-it-us or co-EET-us). Sexual intercourse.

Erotic

Arousing sexual feelings or desires. (From the Greek word for love, *eros*.)

Gender identity

The psychological sense of being male or female.

Gender roles

Complex clusters of ways in which males and females are expected to behave within a given culture.

Human sexuality

The ways in which we experience and express ourselves as sexual beings.

also speak of sex when referring to physical activities involving our sex organs for purposes of reproduction or pleasure: masturbation, hugging, kissing, **coitus**, and so on. Sex also relates to **erotic** feelings, experiences, or desires, such as sexual fantasies and thoughts, sexual urges, or feelings of sexual attraction to another person. We will use the term *gender* in this text to refer to the state of being male or female, as in **gender identity** and **gender roles**.

Human sexuality is defined as the ways in which we experience and express ourselves as sexual beings. Our awareness of ourselves as females or males is part of our sexuality, as is the capacity we have for erotic experiences and responses.

Human sexuality, like biology, psychology, and sociology, is also a *science*. It is an interdisciplinary enterprise that draws upon the scientific expertise of anthropologists, biologists, medical researchers, sociologists, and psychologists, to name but a few of the professional groups involved in the field. These disciplines all have contributions to make, since sexual behavior reflects our biological capabilities, our psychological characteristics, and social and cultural influences.

People's sexual attitudes, experiences, and behaviors are shaped to a large extent by their cultural traditions and beliefs. Consider some of the fascinating findings in this chapter's World of Diversity feature.

Thinking Critically About Human Sexuality

We are inundated with so much information about sex that it is difficult to separate truth from fiction. Newspapers, TV shows, and popular books and magazines contain features about sex that contradict one another, contain half-truths, or draw misleading conclusions. A scientific approach to human sexuality encourages people to think critically about the false claims and findings that are presented as truths.

To help students evaluate claims, arguments, and widely held beliefs, most colleges encourage *critical thinking*. One aspect of critical thinking is skepticism—not taking things for granted. It means being skeptical of things that are presented in print, uttered by authority figures or celebrities, or passed along by friends. Another aspect of critical thinking is thoughtful analysis and probing of claims and arguments. Critical thinking requires willingness to challenge the “common sense” that many of us take for granted. It means scrutinizing definitions of terms and evaluating the premises of arguments and their logic. It also means finding *reasons* to support your beliefs, rather than relying on feelings. When people think critically, they maintain open minds. They suspend their beliefs until they have obtained and evaluated the evidence.

Perspectives on Human Sexuality

Human sexuality is a complex topic. No single theory or perspective can capture all its nuances. In this book we explore human sexuality from many perspectives. In this section we introduce a number of perspectives—historical, biological, cross-cultural, psychological, and sociocultural.

The Historical Perspective

History places our sexual behavior in context. It informs us as to whether our sexual behavior reflects trends that have been with us through the millennia or the customs of a particular era.

Prehistoric Sexuality: From Female Idols to Phallic Worship

Information about life among our Stone Age ancestors is drawn largely from cave drawings, stone artifacts, and the customs of modern-day preliterate peoples. From such sources, historians and anthropologists infer a prehistoric division of labor. By and large,



AROUND THE WORLD IN EIGHTY WAYS—A PREVIEW

Like other aspects of human behavior, sexual beliefs and behaviors vary widely around the world. The United States alone is a nation of hundreds of different ethnic and religious groups, which vary in their sexual customs, attitudes, and beliefs. This diversity extends to the entire “global village” of the world’s nearly 200 nations and to each nation’s own distinctive subcultures.

The World of Diversity features that appear throughout this text explore the rich variety of sexual expression found worldwide. Seeing sexuality in contexts other than our own can help us understand the role of a culture’s beliefs, values, and attitudes on our own and others’ expressions of sexuality. It can help us understand why our partners, who may not share the same ethnic or religious heritage, may have different beliefs about sexual intimacy. Exploring diversity can also help us understand cultural differences related to gender, sexual orientation, sexual attraction, sexual jealousy, premarital sex, teenage pregnancy, and risks of sexually transmitted diseases.

People in some societies believe, for instance, that a brother and sister who eat at the same table are engaging in a mildly erotic type of act. The practice is therefore forbidden (Davenport, 1977). In contemporary Islamic

societies, female sexuality is often viewed as dangerous. If women’s behavior and attire are not kept under strict control, they can be “fatal attractions” for men (Kammeyer et al., 1990). What is sexually arousing, too, varies from culture to culture. Among the Abkhasians in the southern part of what used to be the Soviet Union, men regard the female armpit as highly arousing. A woman’s armpits are, therefore, a sight for her husband alone (Kammeyer et al., 1990).

Of course, one glaring reason for today’s heightened interest in understanding sexuality in a broader perspective is the worldwide AIDS epidemic. Any effort to end this scourge requires that we open our eyes to cultural attitudes and traditions that may increase the risk of transmission of the disease.

If we take a quick tour of the world of diversity within our own borders and beyond, we find that:

- Kissing is practiced nearly universally as a form of petting in the United States, but it is unpopular in Japan and unknown among some cultures in Africa and South America.
- Some societies encourage sexual experimentation and even sexual intercourse among children and adolescents, while others punish

any form of childhood sexual play.

- Marital fidelity is a prominent value in Western culture, but among some people of the Arctic it is considered hospitable for a man to offer his wife to a visiting tribesman.
- In the United States, there remains a tendency to blame the victims of crimes—especially rape victims—rather than the perpetrators. In the strongly patriarchal society of Islamic Pakistan, however, the so-called Hudood Ordinance has actually resulted in *prison sentences* for some women who have brought rape charges against men. Hudood, you see, grants more credibility to the testimony of men than to that of women. An accused man may claim that any sexual contact between himself and the woman making the accusations was consensual, and the court will be inclined to believe him. Women too are also frequently prevented from testifying in court. The result has been that some women who bring charges of rape are sometimes prosecuted for adultery and jailed if found guilty, while their assailants go free (Schork, 1990).
- Sex was typically considered “indecent and unmentionable” in

men hunted for game. Women nurtured children and gathered edible plants and nuts, and crabs and other marine life that wandered along the shore or swam in shallow waters.

Art produced in the Stone Age, some 20,000 years ago, suggests the worship of women’s ability to bear children and perpetuate the species (Fichner-Rathus, 1995). Primitive statues and cave drawings portray women with large, pendulous breasts, rounded hips, and prominent sex organs. Most theorists regard the figurines as fertility symbols.

As the ice sheets of the last ice age retreated (about 11,000 B.C.) and the climate warmed, hunters and gatherers became farmers and herders. Villages sprang up around fields. Men tended the livestock. Women became farmers. As people grew aware of the male role in re-