

## Psychology Reading Notes Set 1: Chapter 1-3, 6,7,10

### Chapter 1: Why A Course in Human Sexuality

- Sexuality- All of the sexual attitudes, feelings, and behaviors associated with being human. DOES NOT refer specifically to a person's response to sexual acts. It is a dimension of one's personality.
- Sex is a source of physical and emotional pleasure
  - Sex can relieve stress and tension, enhances well-being and health
  - There are hundreds of reason people give for having sex
- Most people claim that they learn about sex from their friends and the media rather than their parents
  - Nearly 3/4<sup>th</sup> of TV shows contain sexual behavior or talk about sex
  - Ads often use sex to sell their products.
- Sex education
  - Canada and most of Northern Europe have extensive sexuality education programs
  - The result is a much lower teen pregnancy rate
  - Creates a feeling of tolerant attitudes towards others
- Cross-Cultural Comparisons
  - People's sexual attitudes and behaviors differ
  - The missionary position was named that because Christian missionaries instructed people that other positions were unnatural.
  - The "normal" standard is defined by society
  - Americans are viewed as ethnocentric
    - We view our beliefs and customs as right and they way things ought to be done.
- Sexual attractiveness
  - Cultures differ in regard to what they view as erotic
    - Samoan men find the navel arousing
    - Another culture views the armit of women attractive
    - The knee is found to be erotic in New Guinea
    - Some cultures view skinny men and women attractive while others view Americans standard of obese men and women attractive
    - What is found sexually attractive is a culturally learned response
  - Sexaul behaviors such as kissing and foreplay differ across cultures
  - Mंगाians who live in the South Pacific are the most sexually permissive group in the world.
    - Boys and girls are separated by gender and then boys have a operation leaving a scab on their penis which is then removed

- by an older woman who shows him how to have sex with her.
    - Boys on average will then have sex 18-20 times a week
  - Oral genital sex is common in Western cultures but is seen as disgusting in others
  - Incest and sexual interaction with minors is taboo in some cultures and widely practiced and accepted in others
- Cultural Diversity Within the United States
  - Even among the same subgroups in ethnic groups there are different factors that can influence sexual attitudes and behaviors.
    - Can include factors of religion, level of education, or socioeconomic status
  - One example of changing cultural differences is in regards of oral-genital sex
    - Oral genital sex is commonly practiced by young white middle class people
    - Oral se is less common among less educated and low socioeconomic groups
  - African Americans tend to start having sex at a younger age than Caucasians
  - Asian Americans have the lowest rate of premarital sex and multiple partners but they have the highest rate of abortion.
  - Another factor that can affect the sexual behaviors is how long the generations have been in the United States since they migrated.
    - The longer a generation has been in the US the more that their beliefs and attitudes about sexual behavior match mainstream American beliefs.
- Historical Perspectives
  - In American culture today sex is emphasized everywhere in the media, but then children and young adults are getting the opposite reaction and belief set from school, family and religions.
    - We are permissive yet repressed
- Judaism
  - Was seen as an advantage to have many children
  - Having many children was seen as an obligation but it assured the survivals of the Jewish people
  - Hebrews associated sex with procreation
  - Sons were valued because they were seen as defenders and providers
  - Daughters and wives were viewed as property
  - Not ashamed of genitals because it was thought to have been created in the image of God.
- The Greeks and Romans
  - Placed a strong emphasis on marriage and family.
  - People had children for the State not for God
  - Dualism- the belief that the mind and body are separate

- Dualism gave the rise to ascetic philosophy which taught that wisdom came from virtue.
- Dualism influenced many Christian leaders
- Plato was a Greek Philosopher
- Christianity
  - Separated physical love from spiritual love
  - It was important for Christians to act right behaviorally and have pure inner thoughts as well.
  - Saint Paul was one of the most influential
    - He blamed Eve for the expulsion of the garden
    - Thought celibacy was the way to heaven
    - Marriage was for the ones who had weak will power
    - Celibacy was spiritually superior to marriage
  - Saint Jerome
    - If one loved his wife too much is what thought to be adultery
  - The major influence on Christian beliefs was Saint Augustine
    - As a young adult he lead a promiscuous life
    - Solidified the church's antisexual attitudes
    - Believed that all sexual encounters were sinful and children were the sin of the parents
    - Sex was shameful and associated with guilt
  - All Christians share the same early history
  - Catholic Church believes that sex is only used for procreation
- Victorianism
  - 19<sup>th</sup> century is the Victorian Era after Queen Victoria
  - era of public prudery and purity
  - all aspects of pleasurable sex was denied
  - men were seen as responsible for lust
  - masturbation was thought to cause blindness, consumption, other physical disorders and insanity
  - the thought of sex was thought to be harmful
  - sex was seen as a wifely duty
  - nocturnal emissions were wet dreams
  - devices were invented to help prevent masturbation and wet dreams
  - prostitution and porn flourished during the Victorian Era
- The Sexual Revolution
  - The industrial revolution allowed people to have more free time which meant they were able to engage in sexual activities more often
  - The 1950s abled young adults to have time and mobility which was needed in order for leisure sex
  - The penicillin shot was created in 1950s which was able to cure STD's
  - Sexual Revolution- a time when ore people were engaging in premarital sex, beginning at an earlier age, and more partners.