Human sexuality in physical and mental illnesses and disabilities
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Published by Indiana University Press

Sha'ked, Ami.
Human sexuality in physical and mental illnesses and disabilities.
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Chapter Twelve

Media Review

compiled and edited by

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Devices are never media in and of themselves. They become media only when associated with those peculiar processes of human behavior which we have termed the transmission of information.*

The opening quotation succinctly summarizes a critical key in the successful use of media to convey information. Media of any form can be useful learning tools, but are only effective in transmitting information when used in a context which provides the receiver with an opportunity to personalize the material being offered. Literature in the area of adult education suggests that the adult learner be approached in an andragogical fashion; that is, we, as conveyors of information, should try to respond to the unique learning needs of each person, drawing upon the experiences and perceptions of adult learners in a manner that will allow each to better personalize the material we present.

In the area of sexuality and disability, it is particularly critical that sex educators and counselors be sensitive to the learning needs, unique experiences, and values of each person with whom they work. We must, therefore, carefully choose both the learning tools and the learning situations, mindful of our target population. It is my hope that the media reviews offered in this section provide you with information to make more appropriate choices of media to use in your work.

The films chosen for review were selected from the Multi Media Resource Center in San Francisco, and the Medical Rehabilitation Research and Training Center of the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, University of Minnesota.

Multi Media Resource Center, Inc., has been providing media material on human sexuality to educators, counselors, researchers, and therapists since 1970. Its library includes over 100 films, slides, tapes, and educational guides on sexuality. The sole distributor of materials developed by the National Sex Forum in San Francisco, the Center also distributes the work of the University of Minnesota and of independent filmmakers. Multi Media Resource Center publishes a Resource Guide three times yearly, which contains a complete catalog of their film, videotape, and other audiovisual resources, as well as articles on current affairs and new techniques for education and therapy in the sex field. Information on purchase or rental of films, or a copy of the Resource Guide may be obtained from:

Multi Media Resource Center  
1525 Franklin St.  
San Francisco, California 94109  
Telephone: (415) 673-5100

Send in orders at least four weeks before the planned show date, to ensure their reservations, or a late charge applies.

The Medical Rehabilitation Research and Training Center of the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, University of Minnesota, produces and distributes films on physical rehabilitation, some of which deal with sexuality. Films are available for purchase or rental (five working days). A three-week interval between the date of request and the showing date is required. Available media and rental and purchase information may be obtained from:

Medical Rehabilitation Research and Training Center  
Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Department  
Box 297 Mayo Building  
University of Minnesota  
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455  
Telephone: (612) 373-8990 or 373-9198
Give It a Try

Produced in 1975 by Mary Briggs, this film, a project of the Region V Office of Rehabilitation Services, Center for Continuing Education, was directed by Theodore and Sandra Cole, and filmed in cooperation with the Program in Human Sexuality and the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation of the University of Minnesota Medical School.

*Give It a Try* concerns the troubled relationship between a recently injured quadriplegic male and his able-bodied wife as they attempt to reestablish the physical aspect of their marriage. The film begins as they acknowledge concern and frustration over sexual issues and decide to see a counselor. A sexual counseling program is established and an advocate counseling couple is integrated into the counseling format.

The film illustrates the professional’s approach to gathering background information on a disabled individual’s sexual behavior, and the use of an advocate counseling couple, who discuss their own struggle to reestablish their marriage following the spinal-cord injury of one partner. The advocate couple discuss the importance not only of open communication between partners regarding sexuality, but also of exploring new ways to experience each other sexually. Home assignments are emphasized to ensure that the couple incorporate the material from the counseling sessions into their behavior. The film ends as they are applying some of their newly acquired communication techniques to their relationship—beginning to “give it a try.”

Although sexually nonexplicit, this is a very informative, supportive, and personal film which portrays early reactions to disability as it relates to sexuality in an ongoing relationship. It is recommended for use in the training of rehabilitation counselors, social workers, and disabled individuals. *Give It a Try* would interest disabled individuals and their partners, and could be used by counselors to illustrate the benefits of and approaches to sex counseling.
Bringing It Up

Bringing It Up was produced in 1974 by the Program in Human Sexuality and the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation of the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis. This film demonstrates a doctor’s approach to introducing sex counseling to a spinal-cord-injury patient. The patient, still in the acute phase of hospital care, is being seen for the first time by the consultant physician in rehabilitation. James Boen, Ph.D., shares emotions and concerns that he had when he was injured several years ago with Theodore Cole, M.D., who suggests some questions and issues that should be raised with spinal-cord-injured patients. The interview moves in gradual stages from a discussion of the patient’s injury to his current status and future potential. The patient is encouraged to think about present and future capabilities, sexual and otherwise, while the doctor emphasizes that such thoughts are
normal and that questions will be welcomed and answered as fully as possible.

This teaching film on spinal-cord injury focuses on the right time, place, and manner in which a counselor can begin to discuss with the patient his or her future as a sexual being. It would be useful not only for the training of rehabilitation and hospital personnel—physicians, psychologists, physical and occupational therapists, nurses, social workers, rehabilitation counselors—who work with recently disabled persons, but also for disabled persons themselves.

**Program information:**
- 17 minutes
- color film with sound
- 16mm (reel)

**Can be obtained from:**
- Multi Media Resource Center
  - 1525 Franklin St.
  - San Francisco, California 94109
  - Telephone: (415) 673-5100
  - Purchase: $240 Rental: $40

  *or*

- Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation Department
  - Box 297 Mayo Building
  - University of Minnesota
  - Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455
  - Telephone: (612) 373-8990 or 373-9198
  - Purchase: $120 Rental: $15

**Touching**

This film was produced by the National Sex Forum in 1972, under the coordination of Dr. Theodore Cole of the University of Minnesota Medical School in Minneapolis. Touching shows the
physical expression of sexuality between a man with a C-6 spinal-cord injury and his able-bodied female partner. The setting is a bedroom with a waterbed; background music is the only sound. The man has sensation in only two areas below his shoulders: under the coronal ridge of his penis, and the area immediately around his anus. There is a high emphasis on oral sexuality in the film, which graphically conveys several of the forms of sexual expression possible for individuals with limited sensation and mobility due to spinal-cord injury. The couple are obviously comfortable with a range of sexual expression, and display evident affection and enjoyment of each other.

This film is quite explicit, but sensitively done. It would be useful in couples’ groups where one or both of the partners have physical disabilities and are interested in exploring alternative approaches to sexual activity. Professionals who provide sexual counseling to physically disabled individuals and their partners would find this an instructive training film.

Program information:
16 minutes
color film with sound (music only)
16mm (reel) and video

Can be obtained from:
Multi Media Resource Center
1525 Franklin St.
San Francisco, California 94109
Telephone: (415) 673-5100
Purchase: $240 Rental: $40

If Ever Two Were One

Dr. Theodore Cole, University of Minnesota Medical School Minneapolis, coordinated this film, produced in 1974 by the National Sex Forum. If Ever Two Were One was planned as a com-
panion film to *Touching*. A couple in their early thirties, a paraplegic man and his able-bodied partner, are shown engaging in slow, pleasurable sex. The man has a muscular torso and good mobility, and is able to have partial erections. The female partner uses the "stuffing" technique, and there is mutual sharing of oral-genital sexual activity. The pace is relaxed, and the couple show much warmth and caring for each other.

This film is recommended for use with couples where one or both of the partners have physical disabilities. This film is sensitively done and valuable in its explicit representation of alternative ways for individuals with physical disabilities to approach sexual activity.

**Program information:**

- 14 minutes
- color film with sound (music only)
- 16mm (reel)

**Can be obtained from:**

- Multi Media Resource Center
- 1525 Franklin St.
- San Francisco, California 94109
- Telephone: (415) 673-5100
- Purchase: $224 Rental: $35

**Just What Can You Do**

*Just What Can You Do*, produced in 1972 by the National Sex Forum, shows a group discussion of sexuality and what it means to spinal-cord-injured individuals, led by Dr. Theodore Cole. The group includes two paraplegics, a quadriplegic, their wives, and a female quadriplegic, who center their discussion around the "forced identity crisis" that the spinal-cord-injured persons have had. They share frankly their concerns and experiences on topics such as marriage, physical attractiveness, sexual fulfillment, and incon-
tinenence during sexual activity, illustrating the discussion with personal and often humorous anecdotes. The couples discuss problems and possibilities inherent in a marriage where one person is disabled, emphasizing the importance of open communication to get to know each other better as individuals and to enhance sexual intimacy. The general consensus is that cord-injured people can be sexually active and fulfilled, if they are willing to accept new ways of sexual expression.

Technically, the sound track can occasionally be difficult to understand, but the film is well done and aptly demonstrates the sense of trust and support which group sharing can give to individuals. It would be a good film to use in counseling with couples where one or both of the partners are physically disabled. It also could be used as a training film for professionals to illustrate the therapeutic use of a peer group in sex counseling.

Program information:
23 minutes
color film with sound
16mm (reel) and video

Can be obtained from:
Multi Media Resource Center
1525 Franklin St.
San Francisco, California 94109
Telephone: (415) 673-5100
Purchase: $300 Rental: $50

Artist’s Fantasy

Artist’s Fantasy was produced in 1975 by Sandra Cole and Ted Cole, M.D., of the Program in Human Sexuality and the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation at the University of Minnesota Medical School in Minneapolis. Through the narration of the sole character, a man with cerebral palsy confined to a
wheelchair, this film depicts the thoughts and feelings of a person with a severe physical disability about sex and body image. He describes his interest in sexuality and depicts his sexual fantasies in his drawings. A masturbation experience is shared, showing techniques which a severely disabled individual might use to obtain sexual satisfaction, including the use of a vibrator and varied stroking techniques to comfortably bring pleasure, despite some physical limitations of this man's hands.

This film is explicit, but sensitively done. It would be useful in a training session for human service professionals working in sexuality education or counseling with physically disabled individuals. It could also be used with disabled individuals themselves, to initiate group discussion on such topics as perception of self as a sexual being and body image.

**Program information:**
- 15 minutes
- color film with sound
- 16mm

**Can be obtained from:**
- Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation Department
- Box 297 Mayo Building
- University of Minnesota
- Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455
- Telephone: (612) 373-8990 or 373-9198
- Purchase: $225 Rental: $35

**A Bridge to Disability**

This film was produced by the Program in Human Sexuality and the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, University of Minnesota at Minneapolis. *A Bridge to Disability* shows the trauma of a car accident and subsequent hospitalization through the eyes of the accident victim. Using background voices and visual
scene changes, it traces an individual's impressions of what has happened to him through the feedback provided, often insensitively, by hospital staff and family members. The crisis of learning that he will never walk again is discussed. The film closes on a more positive note showing a variety of situations in which men in wheelchairs are engaging enthusiastically in athletic activities.

This is an excellent film to spur discussion of the need for responsibility and sensitivity by professionals who are initially involved with individuals who have had a traumatic and disabling accident. It could be recommended for use by human service professionals in the medical and rehabilitation area, as well as with other groups of individuals, as a tool to generate discussion of what it might be like to have a seriously disabling accident.

Program information:
10 minutes
color film with sound
16mm

Can be obtained from:
Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation Department
Box 297 Mayo Building
University of Minnesota
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455
Telephone: (612) 373-8990 or 373-9198
Purchase: $175 Rental: $30

Don't Tell the Cripples About Sex

Don't Tell the Cripples About Sex is a two-part film program produced in 1974 at the Human Sexuality Program, University of Minnesota Medical School at Minneapolis. These films show an interview conducted with four individuals with cerebral palsy by Theodore Cole, M.D., of the Human Sexuality Program. These
films, showing two men and two women with varying degrees of both physical impairment and communication difficulties, illustrate the ways in which cerebral palsy may affect a person's physical functioning and communication ability, as well as the range of personal experiences and backgrounds of disabled people.

Prompted by questions from Dr. Cole, the four participants share frankly their most private feelings, creating a feeling of intimacy and a sense of respect in the viewer. In Part I they discuss their developmental years and how sexuality was dealt with by their families, hospital staff, and other professionals, and how each may have turned to activities such as high achievement in school to compensate for little or no socialization and opportunity for sexual expression. In Part II the discussion revolves around their adult experiences with sexuality. They share how they learned about sex, became aware of their own sexual needs, and found ways to become more self-confident socially, sexually, and vocationally. The discussion also brings out the problems incurred in fighting anti-sexual social attitudes, and the tendency by some disabled people to consider asexuality an expected role that must be assumed by individuals with a disability.

Although the discussion can at times be difficult to understand, due to the varying communication abilities of the four participants, in general both films move well over many topics of importance to individuals with disabilities and to professionals who work with them. These films would be useful both to facilitate open discussion among disabled people in a group experience and as a training resource for human service professionals to heighten sensitivity to the sexuality-related problems of disabled people.

Program information:
Part I: 16 minutes
Part II: 23 minutes
color film with sound
16mm and video
Possibilities

Possibilities was produced in 1973 by the National Sex Forum in San Francisco. This film provides a visual illustration and background description of the sexual relationship of a male quadriplegic with a C5-6 spinal injury and his female partner. In the soundtrack he talks about the impact which his injury has had on his sex life and how he went about rediscovering his sexuality in the past year, after going through a period of no sexual activity. He describes where his body has sensation, what he likes sexually, and his new confidence in himself, evolving from his present opportunity for sexual expression.

The film is explicit, showing the sexual techniques developed between this quadriplegic man and his female partner. Breast stimulation, caressing, and oral sex in several positions are demonstrated. The sensitivity and caring of the couple for each other come through clearly.

This film would be very useful in groups of individuals with quadriplegia or paraplegia. The candid self-disclosure of the film could very well facilitate more open discussion and personal sharing by group members. It would be most helpful as a tool to stimulate discussion on how individuals can, subsequent to a severely disabling injury, initiate socialization, create opportunities for sexual relationships to develop, and explore alternate forms of sexual expression.

Program information:
12 minutes
color film with sound
16mm and video

Sexuality and Physical Disability

This is a series of seven color video tapes produced in 1975 by Sandra S. Cole and Theodore M. Cole, M.D., of the Program in Human Sexuality, Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, University of Minnesota Medical School. The series is designed to stimulate discussion and facilitate a deeper consideration of sexuality and why it may be important to the physically disabled and the professionals who work with them, such as the nurse, counselor, social worker, psychologist, physician, therapist, or student of these professions. The presentations explore several important aspects of human sexuality and how it influences and is influenced by disability. They are conducted by various staff members of the Program in Human Sexuality, the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation of the University of Minnesota Medical School, and physically disabled men and women.

For maximum utilization of the information presented, it is recommended that the tapes be presented in a context where an opportunity for discussion is afforded, and that a leader or trainer with expertise in the area of human sexuality, particularly as it relates to those with disabilities, be on hand to address specific questions raised by viewers. Each of the tapes are 30–45 minutes in length and can be used independently.

This series of video tapes can be obtained from two sources:

Multi Media Resource Center
1525 Franklin Street
San Francisco, California 94109
Phone: (415) 928-1133

Available in ¾" color video cassette only.
Rental: $30.00 each; Purchase: $200.00 each.

Audio Visual Library Service
Continuing Education and Extension
University of Minnesota
3300 University Avenue, S.E.
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55414
Phone: (612) 373-3810
Available in both ¾" cassette or ½" reel.
Rental/preview: $25.00 each; Purchase $200.00 each.

Program #1. Orientation to Sexuality of the Physically Disabled (38 min.).

This introductory program is based on the experiences of Sandra Cole and Dr. Theodore Cole at the University of Minnesota Hospitals and the Program in Human Sexuality, as well as their work nationwide in the area of sexuality. Several fundamental assumptions and objectives of sexuality and disability sex education/treatment programs are discussed. Basic to the discussion are two questions: Should sex be discussed with the client who has a disability? and, Who is the best person to discuss sexuality with a disabled person? This tape emphasizes the importance of counselors’ first examining their own sexuality values as a basis for being able to deal comfortably with sexuality in a counseling situation. The presentation ends with representative questions which may facilitate discussion of sexuality and rehabilitation.

This tape would be particularly useful as a discussion stimulus for a training program for counselors who will be working in a rehabilitation setting.

Program #2. Anatomy and Physiology of Sexual Response Cycles (44 min.).

This presentation focuses on the premise that to be comfortable in discussing sex with others and in exploring one’s own sexuality,
a person must first be aware of his or her own physiology and anatomy. Mary Briggs and Theodore Cole, M.D., utilizing schematic artwork and photographs of models, describe the anatomy of adult sex organs and their function during sexual arousal. The four stages of the sexual response cycle—excitement, plateau, orgasm, and resolution—are explained.

The language and explanations in this program are at times technical, and for this reason it would be recommended for use with professionals and selected client/patient populations.

Program #3. Medical and Institutional Aspects (39 min.).

Dr. Theodore Cole presents the issue of sexuality of the physically disabled person through the perspectives of past and current institutional practices and the medical information now available. He explores the various rationalizations which institutions and professionals often use to avoid dealing with sexuality in the rehabilitation process, and encourages greater recognition by professionals of the fact that dealing with sexuality as a natural part of the rehabilitation process can increase the overall level of confidence and functioning of the individual, thereby facilitating gains in other rehabilitation areas. A classification is offered, dividing disability groups by age and rapidity of onset, which aids in understanding the impact of specific physical disabilities on sexual functioning. Slides and photographs are used to highlight the presentation. Dr. Cole also briefly presents a sampling of devices used to deal with altered sexual performance.

This presentation would be a particularly useful one with professionals in various rehabilitation settings to illustrate that sexuality is often affected by disability, and therefore must be seen as an important concern to be dealt with in the rehabilitation process.

Program #4. Body Image (37 min.).

A panel of five physically disabled men and women, whose disabilities range from minimal to severe, discuss their feelings about
self and sexuality in relation to their handicaps. The panelists explore the pressures people with physical disabilities experience in trying to meet other people's expectations in areas such as dating, social development, social acceptance by peers, and the ways in which they deal with problems incurred in these areas. The discussion is supplemented with slides which show some of the physical characteristics of individuals with disabilities, and an exploration of the possible ramifications of these characteristics on an individual's body-image and comfort in physical expression. The tape also addresses the differences in body-image development that may be associated with time of onset of disability (e.g., congenital vs. later in life).

This presentation would be a good way to sensitize rehabilitation personnel to the feelings of disabled individuals about their body-images and perceptions of self as sexual beings. It could also be useful to promote discussion with a group of disabled individuals.

Program #5. Sexual Counseling of Physically Disabled Adults (40 min.).

Four rehabilitation professionals (a medical practitioner, two counseling psychologists, and a community resource coordinator) discuss why they believe that it is important in their work to include sex counseling or discussion with patients/clients. They exchange ideas on how to initiate and carry on a discussion focusing on sexuality, including the importance of permission-giving in the initiation of discussion surrounding sexuality and extending either limited information, specific suggestions, or intensive therapy to the patients, depending upon the nature of the presenting sexual concern and the skills of the professional. The group compares how they deal with people from different life styles and situations, and also explore the ways in which their own personalities, attitudes, and professional roles influence their work.

Emphasizing the importance of professionals being comfortable with their own sexuality and able to discuss sex with others, this
presentation would be valuable for use with health-care practitioners working in rehabilitation settings as a tool to facilitate discussion.

Program #6. *Sexuality and Disability Adjustment* (30 min.).

A physician, a psychologist, and a disabled man and woman explore the relationship of an individual’s sexuality to his or her attitude toward disability, emphasizing how satisfactory sexual adjustment to disability is related to the overall success of the individual in the rehabilitation process, how variations in perception of sexuality may influence social interactions, and how discrepancies in attitudes toward sexuality may introduce conflicts between the health-care team and the disabled individual. The importance of understanding one’s dependency and need for protection, as contrasted with one’s strength or assertiveness, is underscored as central to both sexual health and overall adjustment to physical disability.

This program might be particularly useful as a stimulus for discussion on the area of sexual adjustment in groups of physically disabled individuals.

Program #7. *Sexual Variations* (39 min.).

This program deals with the varieties of human sexual behavior in our society, which has customarily focused on “normal sex,” that is, sexual intercourse between husband and wife for procreation. Any other sexual expression has been labeled abnormal by psychology, unlawful by statutes, and immoral by religions. Tom Maurer, lecturer in the Program in Human Sexuality at the University of Minnesota, addresses questions from a group of disabled and nondisabled individuals. He traces the evolution of information about sexuality, and discusses current legislation prohibiting certain kinds of sexual activity and other ways that society seeks to impose conformity on sexual activity, thus instilling guilt and impinging upon an individual’s sexual fulfillment. Theories of how innate makeup and early learning experiences shape our sex-
ual preferences are discussed. The professional is seen as having an obligation to be aware of the full range of sexual behavior, such as transvestism, exhibitionism, transsexuality, homosexuality, bisexuality, etc.

This presentation is not necessarily focused on disability and sexuality; rather, with an emphasis on homosexuality, it explores the impact of society on sexual behavior and seeks to dispel some myths about sexual variety and to increase overall acceptance and understanding.