

Chapter 3 — The Sex Impulse

from the 1938 edition of *Living a Sane Sex Life* (a.k.a. *The Sex Life Before and After Marriage*)

by
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Sources for Chapter 3, in the order in which they first appear

- (1) Havelock **Ellis**, *Psychology of Sex: A Manual for Students* (New York: Emerson Books, Inc., 1933, 1938)
- (2) G. V. **Hamilton**, M.D., *A Research in Marriage* (New York: Albert & Charles Boni, Inc., 1929)

Key

- (a) **Green** indicates where a source author (other than Sadler) first appears, or where he/she reappears.
- (b) **Magenta** indicates an earlier Sadler book.
- (c) **Yellow** highlights most parallelisms.
- (d) **Tan** highlights parallelisms not occurring on the same row, or parallelisms separated by yellowed parallelisms.
- (e) An underlined word or words indicates where the source and Sadler pointedly differ from each other.
- (f) **Pink** indicates passages where the Sadlers specifically share their own experiences, opinions, advice, etc.
- (g) **Light blue** indicates passages which strongly resemble something in the Urantia Book, or which allude to the Urantia phenomenon.

- (h) **Red** indicates either an obvious error on the Sadlers' part, brought about, in some cases, by miscopying or misinterpreting their source, or an obvious inconsistency brought about by the Sadlers' use of an earlier Sadler text.
- (i) **Gold** highlights key words or themes which will be discussed in the analysis of the chapter.

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III: THE SEXUAL IMPULSE IN YOUTH (Ellis 82)

The First Appearance of the Sexual Impulse (Ellis 82)

[Compare E 82-83.]

Definite sexual self-excitement has long been known to occur at an early age. Early in the nineteenth century various authors in France and elsewhere—Marc, Fonssagrives, Perez, etc.—gave cases of children of both sexes who masturbated from the age of three or four (E 83).

Hamilton, in his more carefully detailed inquiry, has found that 20 per cent. males and 14 per cent. females find pleasure in their sex organs before the age of six.

III — THE SEX IMPULSE

3:0.1 The sex impulse does not appear in childhood as early as the Freudians have assumed, and even in those exceptional cases where it does, we think it should be regarded as a precocious and altogether natural phenomenon rather than as a perverse manifestation. Observations have shown that small children are far more interested in other parts of their anatomy than in the sexual organs. They are not particularly repressed regarding their sexual natures, though they are often inhibited when it comes to discussing their sex curiosity with their elders.

3:0.2 Children very early discover their sex organs and are sometimes, through curiosity, led to indulge in manipulations which possibly produce some degree of sex pleasure,

so that sex play has been known to begin as early as three or four years of age.

Hamilton's investigation suggests that probably 15 per cent of children discover sex pleasure by manipulating the sex organs before the age of six,

Katharine Davis, comparing groups of men and women, found that 20.9 per cent. boys began to masturbate up to and including the age of 11, and 49.1 per cent. girls, though during the next three years the percentage of boys was much in excess of the girls (E 83).

On the whole it would appear, as we should expect, that the child of sound and solid ancestry is less sexually excitable in childhood, and the child of more unsound heredity or of hypersexual parents more precociously excitable. This is definitely suggested by Dr. Hamilton's inquiries which indicate that the later sex life begins the more satisfactory marriage turns out (E 84).

When we survey widely the activities of children it would not seem that it is generally "the primacy of the phallus" which we find most striking

(most of those familiar with babies would say that it is the primacy of the thumb and toes), and so far as it is, it is often (as indeed Freud remarks) essentially an impulse of curiosity

which some mothers unfortunately repress and so drive in and unduly emphasize (E 85-86).

while Katharine Davis reports that 20 per cent of boys and 50 per cent of girls begin masturbation by the age of twelve.

All observers are agreed that the later the sex life begins the greater the likelihood that the sex aspects of married life will turn out satisfactorily.

1. EARLY SEX DISCOVERIES

3:1.1 More recent studies of childhood behavior do not sustain the doctrine of the "primacy of the phallus" which occupied such a prominent place in the Freudian philosophy.

In the average child it would be much more correct to allude to the "primacy of the thumb and toes," and even when children are overinterested in their sex organs, it is far more likely to be merely the gratification of curiosity than the manifestation of a sex impulse.

Undue attention is attracted to the sex organs because mothers who discover this early sex curiosity are so vehement in their prohibitions as greatly to overemphasize the matter in the children's minds

SOURCE

[Masturbation ... appears in early youth, having its rudimentary roots in infancy, simply as a physical pleasure, without erotic imagery, as the satisfaction of an unknown and indeterminate organic need, certainly of sexual nature, but appearing to consciousness more like the action of scratching a sensory surface that itches, though the psychic **condiment of forbidden fruit** may be **added** to its enjoyment (E 105-06).]

Hamilton remarks that 21 per cent. men and 16 per cent. women admit being interested in **urine** or playing with it in early life, and exactly the same percentage as regards **feces** (E 87).

An interesting and often overlooked trait of childish sexuality is **algolagnia**, or a **pleasurable interest in pain**, this including pleasure in the witnessing of pain, the inflicting of pain, or the experiencing of it.

Various adult names are commonly applied to these manifestations such as "cruelty," **"sadism," "masochism,"** etc., and this is probably inevitable because it is only so that adults can explain to themselves these manifestations of the childish psyche (E 89).

[See 3:3.2 and 5:6.6.]

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and thus **add** to their natural curiosity the **"condiment of the forbidden."**

Young children are naturally interested in everything having to do with their bodies and their functions,

so much so that this interest extends in early years to both the **urine** and the **feces**, very young children being prone to play with these body excretions.

3:1.2 Occasionally a young child will manifest the symptom of **"algolagnia,"** that is, a **pleasurable interest in pain** associated with the sexual impulses; this term includes an interest in both inflicting pain and experiencing it.

Later on, these proclivities are termed **"sadism"** and **"masochism,"**

but the frequency of the appearance of these traits in early childhood has been greatly overemphasized. Too much has been made out of rare pathologic specimens of precocious infantile sexuality.

SOURCE

[Games of “punishment” with much reciprocal smacking have always been privately popular among children of both sexes, perhaps especially girls, the hair-brush often being used for this purpose (E 90).]

Hamilton found that among his subjects, who may all be said to be of high character and culture, only 49 per cent. men and 68 per cent. women never experience pleasure in inflicting pain; while nearly 30 per cent. of both men and women had had pleasure in experiencing pain (E 90).

As a distinguished psycho-analyst, Dr. Jelliffe has said of this manner of labeling the impulsive activity of childhood, “expressing it in terms of conscious adult activity is nonsense” (E 91).

[See 5:2.1.]

How far we are here from adult developments is shown by the now well recognized fact that neither similarity of sex nor closeness of blood relationship provides any bar to these manifestations. The adult who succeeds in discerning the occurrence of such manifestations begins to talk solemnly and pedantically of “homosexuality” and “incest” and the “Oedipus complex,” without realizing the absurdity he is perpetrating (E 90-91).

[Freud] went on to find that “it does not seem impossible” that the Oedipus complex is the source of all perversions and also “the actual nucleus of the neuroses” (E 92).

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3:1.3 Children early develop “punishment complexes”—an effort to free themselves from the tortures of *guilt complexes*.

Observations go to show that perhaps 25 per cent of children are able to recall, after they have reached adulthood, that they experienced a certain and peculiar kind of pleasure when suffering the pain of punishment,

but it is a great mistake to evaluate these childhood experiences in terms of adulthood.

Many of them are trivial, wholly transient and passing episodes in childhood psychology.

Overemphasis and misinterpretation of these juvenile experiences have led some psychiatrists to give undue credence to the Freudian Oedipus and castration complexes.

Freud even went so far as to hold the Oedipus complex responsible for most perversions as well as to regard it as “the actual nucleus of the neuroses.”

SOURCE

There is no “aversion to incest,” but under natural conditions a deep sexual attraction requires a powerful stimulus, and this cannot normally arise out of familiarity (E 94).

Elsewhere Rank observes that the famous “mother complex” is not so much a real fixation of the child on the mother as merely a sign of the prevalence today of the belief in the influence of the mother in the child’s education (E 96).

[contd] The castration-complex is associated by psycho-analysts with the Oedipus complex, Freud regarding it as primarily a reaction to intimidation in the field of sex, and any restraint on infantile activity being ultimately ascribed to the father.

It sometimes happens that mothers and nurses, seeing the young child handling his penis, playfully threaten to cut it off, and the child may possibly take the threat seriously, especially if he observes that his sister has no penis; while the little girl may feel it a deprivation to lack an organ her brother possesses (E 97).

In boys who have had no earlier spontaneous impulses of sexual activity and no initiation from companions, the first orgasm usually occurs at puberty during sleep, with or without dreams, sometimes causing the boy much anxiety or shame, until in the course of years he learns to accept it as the almost inevitable accompaniment of adult life when it is being lived continently (E 99).

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3:1.4 From childhood up, increasingly the arousal of the sexual impulse is quite dependent upon a powerful stimulus, and this can hardly be had in familiar situations.

The free and easy associations of family life are such as to prevent any marked sexual excitation.

The mother complex is simply an outgrowth of the continuous association of the child with the mother;

and the castration complex

is due to the mistake of parents and nurses who observe children playing with their genitals, of thoughtlessly threatening to cut them off if the youngsters do not quit this supposedly harmful practice.

3:1.5 Many boys have their first and most vivid sexual excitement during sleep,

SOURCE

It is rare (as I have frequently pointed out though the statement has not always been accepted) for girls to have their first experience of sexual excitement (with or without orgasm) in sleep, and the supposition that they commonly do is due to ignorance (E 99).

The girl must be actively awakened, by others or herself, though after that, even if it may not occur until long after she has reached adult age, she will be liable to experience the most vivid erotic dreams (E 99).

Erotic Day-Dreaming (Ellis 108)

The importance of sex day-dreams is well brought out by Hamilton's careful inquiries. He found that 27 per cent. men and 25 per cent. women were able to say positively that they had sexual day-dreams before knowing anything about sex matters; many others were uncertain, while 28 per cent. men and 25 per cent. women had sex day-dreams before puberty (E 111).

Erotic Dreams in Sleep (Ellis 112)

[?]

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but it is rare for girls to experience their first sexual awakening under these conditions.

The average girl or young woman does not have erotic dreams unless she has been previously sexually aroused.

2. SEXUAL FANTASIES

3:2.1 Daydreaming is an inevitable phase of the child's life, and it is not strange that, in accordance with their nature and environment, children must, at a very early age, experience erotic fantasies.

Students of this problem conclude that about 25 per cent of boys and girls have sexual daydreams even before they know anything to speak of about sex matters.

3:2.2 Long before puberty the average boy or girl either directly or indirectly experiences sex fantasies during sleeping dreams, all of which are altogether normal.

That under conditions of sexual abstinence in healthy individuals there tend to be some auto-erotic manifestations during waking-life, both theory and a careful study of the facts lead us to believe. There can be no doubt, however, that, under the same conditions, the occurrence of the complete orgasm during sleep with, in men, emissions, is altogether normal (E 113).

It occasionally happens, however, that nocturnal emissions are entirely absent

(Tchlenoff's investigations seem to show their absence in about ten per cent., but Hamilton in only 2 per cent.) (E 114).

Paget declared that he had never known celibate men who had not such emissions from once or twice a week, to every three months, both extremes being within the limits of good health, while Brunton regarded once a fortnight or once a month as about the usual frequency ... (E 114).

Hammond considered also that they occur about once a fortnight. This was also found the most usual frequency among over two thousand Moscow students investigated by Tchlenoff.

Ribbing regarded ten to fourteen days as the normal interval, and Hamilton found from a week to a fortnight the most frequent interval (19 per cent. cases).

Löwenfeld put the normal frequency at about once a week; this seems near the truth as regards many fairly healthy young men and it corresponds with the exact records of several healthy young adults which I have obtained (E 114).

In the male, after reaching puberty, these dreams are accompanied by the ejaculation of seminal fluid;

in more than 30 years of practice we have met but few men who have been entirely free from them,

and in the male population as a whole, probably less than 2 per cent would fall in this class.

These "wet dreams" occur anywhere from once or twice a week to once a month, occasionally not oftener than once in two or three months.

3:2.3 We are inclined to believe that, if statistics covering a large number of healthy young men were available, night losses would be found to occur, on the average, about once every two weeks.

Perhaps the increased sexiness of modern moving pictures and literature should lead us to expect them to more nearly approach the ten day period.

In our own practice, without having precise statistics to present, we estimate that the average period is more nearly one week.

SOURCE

Sometimes the erotic dream occurs **without any emission**, and not infrequently the emission takes place **after the dreamer has awakened**. Occasionally the approaching orgasm is repressed in the **half waking state**; this is termed by Näcke *pollutio interrupta* (E 114-15).

The dreams [recorded by Marro in his study of the erotic dreamlife of young men in northern Italy] are mainly visual, tactual elements coming second, and the *dramatis persona* is usually either an **unknown woman** (27 per cent. cases), or one only known by sight (56 per cent.), and in the majority is, at all events in the beginning, an ugly or fantastic figure, becoming more attractive later in life, but never identical with the woman loved during waking life (E 115).

It has been noted by many (Löwenfeld, etc.) that **people seldom dream erotically of the persons whom they are in love with**, even after falling asleep thinking of the beloved (E 116).

Thirty-three of [Marro's] subjects, as a result of sexual or general disturbances, had had **nocturnal emissions without dreams**;

these were always found **exhausting** (E 115-16).

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3:2.4 Occasionally these sex fantasies occur, more especially in the male, when the individual is in a **half-waking or a dreamy, trancelike state**, in which case they are **not always accompanied by the emission**, or this takes place **after the dreamer has more fully wakened**.

When a young man has these nocturnal sex fantasies, the female appearing in his dreams is usually an **unknown woman**, although this is not always the case.

3:2.5 **Rarely does a young man dream of sex experiences with his sweetheart or the woman with whom he is having a romantic love affair.**

Many times the face of the female consort in the dream is veiled or is not recallable after awaking.

Occasionally there is a **nocturnal emission without a dream**—at least no dream is recalled on waking.

This most often occurs in those nervous patients who claim that such phenomena are very **exhausting**.

Instead of being exhausted by these dreamless emissions, they have them because they are already in a very irritable or nervously exhausted state.

3:2.6 These erotic dreams accompanied by nocturnal emissions are a normal part of the life of every healthy boy.

In men the phenomenon is fairly simple; it usually appears about puberty, continues at intervals of varying duration during sexual life provided the individual is living chastely; and is, generally, though not always, accompanied by erotic dreams which lead up to the climax ... (E 117).

They begin at puberty with the changing of the voice and continue into adult life until after fifty years of age in those men who refrain from coitus and masturbation.

After the fifth decade of life the male does not, as a rule, undergo ejaculation even when having erotic dreams.

In women, however, the phenomena of auto-erotism during sleep seem to be much more irregular, varied, and diffused (E 117).

In the female, the erotic dream is a much more irregular and varied affair.

As pointed out when dealing with early manifestations of sex, it is not until the orgasm has been definitely produced in the waking state—under whatever conditions it may have been produced—that in women it begins to occur during sleep, and even in a strongly sexual woman living a repressed life it is often infrequent or absent (in 60 per cent. according to Hamilton).

Our observation is that women who have not experienced orgasm in the waking state, either by masturbation or coitus, are unable to in their erotic dreams.

In women, who have become accustomed to sexual intercourse, erotic dreams of fully developed character occur, with complete orgasms and accompanying relief—as may occasionally be the case in women who are not acquainted with actual intercourse;

Women who have long masturbated, or who have had previous sexual experience do have orgasm in their sex dreams and thereby secure complete relief from sexual tension.

SOURCE

some women, however, even when familiar with actual coitus, find that sexual dreams, though often accompanied by emissions, are only the symptom of desire and do not produce relief (E 118).

[contd] One of the most interesting and important characters by which the erotic dreams of women ... differ from those of men is in the tendency to evoke a repercussion in the waking life ... This is common, even in healthy and normal women, and is exaggerated in **neurotic subjects**, by whom the dream may even be interpreted as a reality, and so **declared on oath**, a fact of practical importance, since it may lead to unfounded accusations of assault under anesthesia (E 118).

[See 22:2.1 in *The Mind at Mischief* parallel chart.]

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3:2.7 To the unmarried woman such incomplete dream fantasies often prove to be very exhausting or frequently produce a very high degree of nervous tension

unless she has learned to complete the dream by the manual production of orgasm.

3:2.8 In this connection it should be stated that

certain highly **neurotic and hysteric types of women** often have erotic dreams which are so vivid that they **declare on oath** that their sleeping rooms have been invaded by known or unknown men, and that they have been sexually attacked.

It is highly probable that some strongly sexed young women gain more or less sex relief of this sort during hysteric fainting spells.

3. SEX INFORMATION

Education in Sex (Ellis 136)

3:3.1 We are of the opinion that sex education should be given children by their parents, and that the best technic of imparting sex instruction is to *live naturally and normally in the presence of the growing child,*

It is desirable that children should be familiar with the sight of each other's naked bodies, and some parents adopt the plan of themselves bathing **naked** with their children when the latter are still very young (E 140).

so that he becomes thoroughly familiar with the **nude** forms of his father and mother.

[In other words, always answer his sex questions but never volunteer advance information on sex matters (*The Essentials of Healthful Living* 396).] [See also 4:4.1.]

His questions should be answered frankly as they arise, but little or no advance information regarding sex matters should be volunteered.

Make sure that the confidential channel of communication is kept wide open—that is, see that he comes to his parents for information instead of seeking to satisfy his curiosity in other directions.

That, at all events, is the later opinion of **Rank** in his work on *Modern Education*. “Sexuality is not natural to the child,” he observes; “it might rather be conceived of as the individual’s natural enemy, against which he defends himself, from the beginning, with his whole personality” (E 136-37).

Even **Rank**, a former disciple of Freud, does not hesitate to say that “Sexuality is not natural to the child.”

The proper attitude towards sexuality in the child is, therefore, one of watchful hygiene. The childish erotic impulses are often unconscious, and nothing is gained by **rendering them conscious or by concentrating attention on them** (E 137).

When a child’s sex impulses are subconscious, it is disadvantageous to try to **render them conscious or to concentrate attention upon them.**

This means that the mother must refrain from manifesting any surprise at whatever she sees or hears of a sex nature in her children,

It also seems desirable in some cases to warn the mother not only against too great an anxiety to punish a child exhibiting these manifestations, but also against any **excess of physical tenderness** which may unduly arouse the emotions of susceptible children (E 137).

Many acts of children, which to adults appear to reveal **vicious** sexual motives, often have no sexual motive at all, but spring merely from the play impulse or from the desire for knowledge (E 137).

and that she will, as the years pass, refrain from **excessive physical contact** with them.

Much of the sex play of children which adults regard as **vicious** and reprehensible is wholly innocent

and would pass off with little concern were its importance not overemphasized by the admonitions and prohibitions of parental alarm.

3:3.2 We have taken altogether too *pathologic a view of childhood.*

It is unfortunate that the students of childhood have often been people who have gained their knowledge from the study of **neurotic subjects** (E 137).

Even psychiatrists are in danger, because of their long contact with **neurotic subjects**, of misinterpreting the innocent and wholly harmless play of children.

There is danger, it is sometimes said, that children's minds will be artificially concentrated on **sexual subjects**, of which otherwise they might remain blissfully unconscious.

Parents should be careful not unnecessarily to attract the attention of the little folks to **sex matters**.

It is important, however, to remember the natural operations of a child's mind. A child's desire **to know where babies come from** is not a symptom of sexual consciousness, it is a **natural** desire to discover an important scientific fact (E 138).

It is perfectly **natural** for them to want **to know where babies come from**,

and there is no reason why they should not be wisely and frankly enlightened on these points.

It is the forced and unreasoned suppression of these natural curiosities, and not their gratification, which favors an **unhealthy sexual consciousness** (E 138).

An **unhealthy sex consciousness** is produced either by withholding information or by volunteering too much.

When the relation between mother and child is natural and intimate every function must from time to time come up for consideration, and the sensible mother will deal with each as it arises, though without carrying her information further than the **child's curiosity at the time demands.**

The main thing is to **satisfy the child's sexual curiosity**

and at the same time so keep his confidence that he will come back for more information in the future.

Sex and excretion will be dealt with as simply as anything else, and neither with the slightest sign of repulsion or disgust.... The wholesome mother feels no **disgust** for her child's **excretions,**

3:3.3 Mothers should be particularly careful about suggesting attitudes of **disgust** or repulsion toward the **organs of excretion.**

and that attitude is important, for as the **organs** of sex and of excretion are on the surface **so closely adjoined** any attitude of disgust towards one is likely to embrace the other (E 138-39).

The excretory apparatus is **so closely associated** with the sex mechanism

that many children are thus introduced to an unhealthy attitude toward sex which creates no end of trouble as they grow up into youth and adulthood.

SOURCE

In the schools, concomitantly and as the child develops, we may reasonably expect to see an elementary training in **biology**, covering the main facts of human life—including, though with no undue insistence, sex—given to all boys and girls. As a distinguished biologist, Ruggles Gates, has said: “Every school-boy and girl should, as an essential part of their education, receive some instruction regarding the nature, structure, and action of **plant** and **animal** organisms, as well as their relationships and reactions upon each other...” (E 144-45).

XIV: PRE-PUBERTAL SEX EXPERIENCES; PRE-PUBERTAL AND POST-PUBERTAL SEX AGGRESSIONS (Hamilton 328)

Table 281 (Hamilton 342)

Correlations between History as to Pre-marital Sex Aggressions and Present Orgasm Capacity [in Women] ...

1. Never victim of pre-marital sex aggression (54 cases) [*Orgasm capacity adequate* 38, *Orgasm capacity inadequate* 16]

2. Victim of pre-marital sex aggression (46 cases) [*Orgasm capacity adequate* 16, *Orgasm capacity inadequate* 30] (H 342).

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3:3.4 Sex instruction during the school age is far better imparted in connection with other subjects, such as physiology, anatomy, **biology**, **botany**, and **zoology**, than independently.

It is not healthy, especially in mixed classes, to devote special sessions to the study of sex alone. Let the study of the sex organs fall into its natural place along with that of the other vital organs.

3:3.5 It has been definitely shown that the less sex turmoil young people undergo, the more likely they are to have a happy sexual experience in marriage.

SOURCE

[contd] The above correlations suggest that the girl who escapes upsetting sex aggressions has a much better chance of experiencing the orgasm in marital copulation than one who has been the victim in such an episode (H 342).

[?]

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Girls who do not have upsetting sexual affairs before marriage have a far better chance of achieving adequate orgasm and sexual satisfaction in married life;

it has been shown that the sex atmosphere of the home in which the child is raised has a great deal to do with the way that child, boy or girl, will later react to sex matters, extending even to those of married life.