

SEX EDUCATION IN THE SCHOOLS*

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Editor's Note: The problem of sex education has recently come into prominence again, mainly for two reasons. One is a general trend toward increased frankness in sexual matters, vague and confused though this trend may be. The other is the increase in "juvenile delinquency," particularly in the sexual realm, which has forced the problem on people's attention. The striking thing about all the discussions of sex education is that they inevitably lead into a blind alley. What is even more striking is that nobody seems to see a problem in this very fact. This fact will undoubtedly continue to exist until a basic reorientation on a broad social basis takes place, a reorientation not primarily with regard to sex education but with regard to sexuality itself. We publish the following communication—which was written several years ago—because it points out where the basic problem lies, the problem which will have to be solved before any rational, that is, positive and helpful sex education will be possible.—T. P. W.

Even progressive educators often state that the problem of sex education can be solved by furnishing the child, at the age of about 8 or 9 years, with information on sex, "along the lines of information about the digestive processes," etc., supplemented later by "a brief and factual description of pregnancy, of venereal disease, and of the existing preventive methods." One can agree with a good many of these proposals when they concern themselves with actual sex education. But it seems to me that on the whole they show to what small degree the results of psychoanalytic and sex-economic research in this field have been put to use. I have the impression that circles concerned with sex education have not changed their views on this subject. They still believe that "if only the civic authorities would give their support, the teachers would be able to handle the problem."

As far as pregnancy and venereal disease are concerned, one can agree with the above, as long as the pupils are not frightened too much. It is also quite correct to

place the biology of sex in the foreground. But we must remember that the sexual function cannot be put side by side with the other physiological functions of the body, and such a comparison often strikes people as repulsive. Actually, what we are concerned with is a person's ability to live, primarily his ability to experience desire, joy, and satisfaction in love. It is all the more important to stress this, since today there exists, more strongly than before, a tendency to resolve the whole problem into one of reproduction, or into a race problem, while few people strive to prevent sexual repressions and their results in the form of all kind of nervous illness. All of this suffering has its deepest roots in the fact that people lack the ability to attain a full and happy sex life. Today a person's sex life is seldom completely happy; more often it is the source of unhappiness and separation, nervous suffering and unwanted children.

When we, as progressive educators, consider this question, therefore, we are talking about nothing more nor less than the love life and happiness of humanity. From this point of view it is clear why "factual information," placing the question of sex

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† *Editor's note:* This is a pseudonym. Present conditions force us, unfortunately, to withhold the names of our European co-workers.

education in the same class with race problems or reproduction, is often harmful and confusing. Indirectly it aids and abets a system of suppression and that particular form of education which, often unconsciously, pictures sex as sinful, harmful, or as a luxury that keeps the lower classes from struggling for a better life. We live today in an atmosphere of antisexual, moralistic and often ascetic prejudices and conceptions. This atmosphere is, on the whole, counteracted by nothing more than a vague desire to change it and find something better. This desire is found particularly among young people. It lacks leadership and receives little or no support among older people. Progressive educators can and must help. They must accept the challenge of this problem, since modern scientific psychology and study of human character structure have shown that the problem of sexual reform is the basic one in all cultural problems: morals, religion, nationalism, and prejudices, asceticism and, first and last, the submission to authority and the craving for leadership—all these things have their roots, for the individual as well as for the masses, in sexual suppression. Historically, this suppression developed simultaneously with the economic suppression which came with the transition from matriarchy to patriarchy. This fact emphasizes the basic importance of the economic factors. But at the same time it shows that the way in which these factors mold human structure, ideology and culture, is primarily by sexual suppression.

If, then, we want to fight against intellectual reactionaries, we must fight for the liberation of the sex life. We must, as well as we can, help people to achieve the highest joy and satisfaction in love. This goal corresponds exactly to the goal of the real educator who has the courage to make the well-being of the children his only aim.

And how can it be done? Here we face, among other problems, the question of sex education. First we must ourselves know the prerequisites of a happy and satisfying sex life. We may divide it into two parts, the inner and outer. For a healthy sex life you must have two partners, both unrepressed and free enough to be able to surrender themselves completely. The outer circumstances include, first and foremost, living conditions that make it possible for them to be together, nude, without the danger of interruptions; and a contraceptive technique that will not hinder the act of surrender (such as coitus interruptus), or take away some of the pleasure (such as condoms). It must be a technique that can be relied upon; today that means a pessary.

I repeat: the goal of education is that of preserving the young person's ability to experience love and to surrender himself or herself to it. This goal coincides with that of educating people to use their common sense and not to bow blindly to authority, of bringing up young people so as to make them able to escape nervousness and neuroses and to gain happiness.

Most important is pre-school education, particularly with regard to masturbation and sexual play. But we need to go far beyond this: to the education of the entire family. Reich has shown that present-day family upbringing is patriarchal, authoritarian and sexually repressive. We must create an environment in which the child can live his own life and have his own sex life. What forms it will take, we do not yet know; only the future can tell. We must fight against everything that portrays sex as something dirty, or merely as a reproductive process, no matter if this idea is supported by the state, the schools, the church or the parents, and whether or not it appears in the form of direct repression or that of "sex education."

We must, therefore, give a *sex education that will act as a liberating force,*

affirming life and sexuality. The last is decisive. We must ask of all sex education: does it increase or does it lessen sexual anxiety? Does it free the real life forces? Or does it make people retreat more than ever into themselves? As it now stands, practically all sex education increases anxiety and makes sex seem repulsive. As far as schools go, I know of only one—in spite of assiduous search—where sex education has not, on the whole, merely increased the fear of sex. This is not surprising since sex education today rests in the hands of people who—the best of intentions notwithstanding—try to further the officially supported sexual ideology: compulsive morality and monogamy, abstinence, etc., as represented by parents and teachers, physicians and religious leaders. For in sex education everything depends upon the spirit in which it is given.

If sex education is to have a liberating influence, therefore, we must find people who can teach it in a manner that will fulfill this goal. It is impossible to say in advance who will be best fitted to teach it, physicians or teachers or parents. There are some few in each group who are able to do it, but the majority are not. I believe we must discover slowly, by experimentation, who can best teach sex education. But it goes without saying that anyone who looks on the sex life of children and adolescents as sinful, as something to be suppressed, is useless as a

teacher and can only do harm. Only those who believe in the right of every person to sexuality and happiness and want to help those who need help—and not merely with fancy words—are fitted for the task. We must realize, also, that the primary goal is that of creating an atmosphere where happiness and the right to a sex life is once more given the prominent place that belongs to it, as it was in primitive matriarchy, and as it will be again in a coming socialist world. We must also realize the feelings of the adolescent as he nears sexual maturity. At this time healthy sexual desires often spring up in the form of vague and half-conscious wishes for sexual love. It is exactly as with a young plant that cannot survive unless the best possible conditions for growth are provided, a plant that can be destroyed completely if it is trod upon.

In short: if you want to build a house, you must not begin with the roof. There is no sense in asking for sex education in the schools or elsewhere, before we know clearly *why* we ask for it, *what* it is going to be given for, and *with what, exactly, it is to deal.* When we have the answers to these questions, and only then, will we discover *how* to create that form of sex education which will serve its function best. And then we will be able to build the house solidly, beginning with the foundation.

Projeto Arte Org

Redescobrimo e reinterpretando W. Reich

Caro Leitor

Infelizmente, no que se refere a orgonomia, seguir os passos de Wilhelm Reich e de sua equipe de investigadores é uma questão bastante difícil, polêmica e contraditória, cheia de diferentes interpretações que mais confundem do que ajudam.

Por isto, nós decidimos trabalhar com o material bibliográfico presente nos microfilmes (Wilhelm Reich Collected Works Microfilms) em forma de PDF, disponibilizados por Eva Reich que já se encontra circulado pela internet, e que abarca o desenvolvimento da orgonomia de 1941 a 1957.

Dividimos este “material” de acordo com as revistas publicadas pelo instituto de orgonomia do qual o Reich era o diretor.

01- International Journal of Sex Economy and Orgone Research (1942-1945).

02- Orgone Energy Bulletin (1949-1953)

03- CORE Cosmic Orgone Engineering (1954-1956)

E logo dividimos estas revistas de acordo com seus artigos, apresentando-os de forma separada (em PDF), o que facilita a organizá-los por assunto ou temas.

Assim, cada qual pode seguir o rumo de suas leituras de acordo com os temas de seu interesse.

Todo o material estará disponível em inglês na nuvem e poderá ser acessado a partir de nossas páginas Web.

Sendo que nosso intuito aqui é simplesmente divulgar a orgonomia, e as questões que a ela se refere, de acordo com o próprio Reich e seus colaboradores diretos relativos e restritos ao tempo e momento do próprio Reich.

Quanto ao caminho e as postulações de cada um destes colaboradores depois da morte de Reich, já é uma questão que extrapola nossas possibilidades e nossos interesses. Sendo que aqui somente podemos ser responsáveis por nós mesmos e com muitas restrições.

Alguns destes artigos, de acordo com nossas possibilidades e interesse, já estamos traduzindo.

Não somos tradutores especializados e, portanto, pedimos a sua compreensão para possíveis erros que venham a encontrar.

Em nome da comunidade Arte Org.

Textos da área do desenvolvimento infantil

Texts from the area of child development

International Journal of Sex Economy and Orgone Research

Children

01 Ernst Walter. A Talk With a Sensible Mother 1936
International Journal of Sex Economy and Orgone Research Volume 1 Number
1 1942
Interval 16-22 Pag. 11-17

02 Paul Martin. Sex-Economimic Upbringing 1942
International Journal of Sex Economy and Orgone Research Volume 1 Number
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Interval 23-37 Pag. 18-32

03 Editorial. Physiological Anchoring of Psychic Conflicts 1942
International Journal of Sex Economy and Orgone Research Volume 1 Number
2 1942
Interval 83-85 Pag. 177-179

04 A.S.Neills. The Problem Teacher I 1939
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Interval 86-90 Pag. 180-184

05 A.S.Neills. The Problem Teacher II 1939
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3 1942
Interval 90-96 Pag. 282-288

06 A High School Student. The Sexual Behavior of Adolescents in a New York
Borough 1943
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Interval 61-65 Pag. 153-157

07 Theodore P. Wolfe. A Sex.economist Answers I 1943
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Interval 66-73 Pag. 158-165

- 08 Paul Martin. Reviews Which Kind Progressive Education 1943
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- 10 Theodore P. Wolfe. A Sex.economist Answers II 1943
International Journal of Sex Economy and Orgone Research Volume 3 Number
1 1944
Interval 67-75 Pag. 62-70
- 11 Theodore P. Wolfe. Reviews The Boy Sex Offender 1943
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- 17 Felicia Saxe. A case History 1945
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- 19 Notes Editorial. Sexuality Before the Law 1945
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McF 302 Orgone Energy Bulletin, Vol. 1, No. 4. Oct. 1949
Interval 12-14 Pag. 160-164

02 Richard Singer. Play Problema of a Healthy Child 1949
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Interval 3-13 Pag. 121-138

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