

Together Sex

The Playful Couple's Key
To Enjoying Swinging

By Ed and Dana Allen

This book is dedicated to Robert Rimmer,
a keen and compassionate trailblazer.

Together Sex

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Dirtyword

The American humorist James Thurber once collaborated with essayist E.B. White on a satirical book they called *Is Sex Necessary?* In their chapter on “What Should Children Tell?” they advise:

“It is of the utmost importance, in imparting sex knowledge to one’s parents, that it be done in such a way as not to engender fear or anxiety. The phraseology should be chosen carefully, and efforts should be made to explain everything clearly but without the use of words that have a tendency to make old people nervous.”¹

Not being children, we aren’t going to follow completely the advice of these esteemed writers; we *shall* make efforts to explain everything clearly, but we shall *not* shy away from words that make some people nervous.

For one thing, the word “vulgar” means “of the common people,” and we would rather be offensive to a few than pretentious. For another, we believe that the prohibition of certain terms in “polite” speech stems mostly from ethnic prejudice. Those who think it acceptable to say “coitus” but improper to say “fuck” are merely upholding a tradition of bias in favor of Latin-based words that has been around since the Romans first thought themselves superior to the Germans and the Celts.

So, it is impossible to be politically correct, honor all cultures, and respect all languages while using only highfalutin’ phraseology. For those readers who pretend offense at this approach, we say: “Tough feces!”

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*Pleasure is indeed a virtue. ...
The more open a society, the more healthy its people.*

—Seth [via Jane Roberts], *The Way Towards Health*

¹Written in 1929, this book is published by Common Reader/ Arkadine Press —www.commonreader.com.

Introduction

WHAT'S A SEX PARTY?

If we could get just one message across to the young... it would be that sex should be for recreation, not procreation.

— Phyllis Kronhausen

“New Sexual Life Styles,” *Playboy*, September 1973, p. 84.

Ever since we hit puberty, sex has been in attendance at our social gatherings. Often, sex is an unobtrusive guest, quietly molding our stance and dress, satisfied with no more attention than an occasional innuendo or off-color joke. Sometimes, especially in the presence of alcohol, sex gets a bit more boisterous, instigating audacious flirtations that can lead to furtive groping, even hurried copulation in the powder room or atop the coats on the guest bed.

To enjoy some sort of sex at a party is quite common, but to really have a “sex party” the sex must not be relegated to lurking in darkened corners, it must be *invited* ... as the guest of honor.

A Sex Party is a party at which intimate, physical, sexual interaction is condoned and encouraged.

Please note that we did not say “expected” and certainly not “demanded.” The main purpose of all parties is — or should be — to have fun, and people don’t enjoy themselves much when trying to meet someone else’s expectations. In fact, we have attended a few sex parties at which everyone laughed and had a great time, and no one actually had sex. That’s not typical, but it’s possible.

WHAT MAKES A SEX PARTY BETTER?

In one word: FUN. The more smiles, the more laughter, the more satisfaction, the better the party. Size is not a determining factor; neither is expense, nor location. What the hosts do is important, but even more important is what the guests do, how they feel, and what they think.

In this book, we show you how to get the maximum pleasure from sex parties, whether you are the host or a guest. We start with the importance of a playful attitude. Then we point out how and why nasty people are trying to repress that attitude and how you can help protect your freedom to enjoy sex with your friends. Then we talk about how to find and meet some new friends who want to share sexy good times with you. Next, come suggestions on how to act and what to beware of while you’re partying. Following this, we talk about the physical, mental, and emotional qualities that will help you to improve your enjoyment of all those good times. And we conclude by telling you how to make your friends think you’re the greatest host ever.

Chapter 1

PLAY BALLING

It is not the welfare of the species, or the task of reproduction, or the future development of mankind that attracts people to each other. The love and sex life of healthy people, in spite of the fact that it frequently reaches great peaks of ecstasy, is nevertheless also easily compared to the games of children and puppies. It is cheerful, humorous, and playful.

— Abraham Maslow

Motivation and Personality

Ask 50 randomly selected people “Why sex?” and you will, no doubt, receive a confusing batch of responses and a couple of blank stares. Excluding the stares, all of the answers should fit into one of three categories of human activity. Whether man or woman, adult or child, Republican or Democrat, everything you do is either rest, work, or play. This may seem an elementary concept, and it is. Which is why it is so important to understand clearly.

If you are not engaged in any activity at all, you don’t exist ... you cannot be *just* resting. Rest is a name for the unconscious refueling and maintenance of your entire system. If you go to sleep exhausted and awake refreshed, you have undergone a change during the night. This change is the result of thousands of different activities performed by your internal systems: a performance called resting.

Work is any activity that is consciously performed in order to achieve something. As with rest, work is *results* oriented. The result hoped for may be money, status, love, inner peace, or whatever. Reading the newspaper in order to impress others with your knowledge is work. Even reading to enhance your own sense of civic responsibility is work. Taking up tennis in order to reduce your weight is work. However, if you swat tennis balls solely because you enjoy the feeling of swatting tennis balls, your actions fall into the third category: play.

While work is *for* a purpose, play *is* the purpose.

Adults rarely remember how to play. An adult may climb a tree to better see the surrounding terrain, or to discover how fast he can get to the top, or to prove that

he can still do it. A child will climb a tree for the pleasure he gets from the process.

If you really *play* football, the score doesn’t matter. If you really *play* the piano, you don’t care what anybody thinks of your talent. Playing is something you do for the pure pleasure inherent in the performance.

Sex can be rest, work, or play, or it can be all of these activities simultaneously.

Sex can be rest. If you’re not trying to break your record for notches on the bedpost in a single night, sex will relax and rejuvenate you. Any prostitute will affirm that sex can be work. Yet result-oriented sex is hardly limited to beds of ill repute. If you receive the advances of your spouse in order to keep your relationship pleasant, then sex is work. If you are trying to conceive a child, sex is work. If you are attempting to prove your love, sex is work. If you’re trying to relax so that you can get to sleep, sex is work.

This isn’t necessarily bad. Work can definitely be, and should be, pleasurable. Most of us find some pleasure in whatever we happen to be working at, particularly when we achieve the results we are striving toward. The unfortunate point is that, just as many adults have lost their capacity to play at cards or at tree climbing, so most people have misplaced their ability to play at sex.

THE VALUE OF PLAY

When we speak of recreational sex — of sex as play — people sometimes accuse us of being frivolous. In actuality, play is a serious and meaningful activity, even more serious and more meaningful than work. After all, work is merely a way of getting what you want, a means to an end. Play *is* the end. Play is the very thing we want.

Since we all work so that we may gain the opportunity to play (and the toys to play with), we might expect play to be a central concern of humankind. But humans seem more concerned with making sacrifices on the altar of a better life than with actually living well.

THE ELEMENTS OF PLAY

The activity of play can involve every aspect of our being. We can physically exercise our muscles for the pleasurable sensation of moving gracefully. We can mentally attack a brainteaser for the pleasurable sensation of

tuning up our brain. We can allow our emotions free rein and fall in love with someone we just met for the pleasurable sensations of being infatuated. We can let our spirits pour freely forth for the pleasurable sensations that praising God can bring us.

Society seems to insist, however, that we have some motive beyond the enjoyment of the act itself. So we have Little Leagues to make physical exercise into work, and chess championships to make mental exercise into work, and going steady to make infatuation into work, and organized religion to make praising God into work.

Many, if not most, people have resigned themselves to such encumbrances and, thus, rarely manage to be playful. It is little wonder then that sexual interaction, which can be physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual all at the same time, is particularly resistant to the idea of play. This is the most damnable of shames. Sex play can be the most rewarding sort of play there is.

THE VALUE OF PLAYFUL SEX

Sex without appended purpose is pure sex.

If "pure sex" strikes you as a derogatory or degrading activity, we suspect you've been listening too much to our self-appointed "moral authorities" and not enough to yourself. "Pure sex," we can hear a few of you exclaim, "do you mean merely the physical joining of genitalia?!"

First, we do not mean "merely" anything. The joining of healthy genitals is an activity that produces very pleasurable sensations and is easily of as much absolute value as any other physical activity you could name. Crotch touching crotch needs no outside purpose or situation to justify it, any more than does hand touching hand.

Secondly, "pure sex" must include whatever emotions and thoughts are directly involved in the interaction. Humans (with the possible exception of Scientific Materialists) aren't just physical beings. We simply aren't capable of performing *any* activity on a purely physical plane. Unless you can fuck in a coma, you will find "merely genital sex" impossible.

Playful sex, therefore, is sex for the joy of sex — the physical joy, and/or the mental joy, and/or the emotional joy, and/or the spiritual joy inherent in the act itself.

Please note, that no one of these joys has any absolute value unto itself, and no objective superiority

over any other joy. Each of us has his/her own purpose on this earth that each must work out in his/her own way. There are no "higher" pleasures and "baser" pleasures. There is only what is right for each individual at any given moment.² And *you* are the only legitimate authority on what is right for you. Sometimes the emotional pleasures of being united with another will have greater meaning for you, and sometimes the physical sensations will be most important, and sometimes sex won't be important at all.

Usually your motivations will be compound. We have stated that sexual activity *can* be work, rest, and play simultaneously; it would be more accurate to say that all sexual activity *is* work, rest, and play.

Playful sex, then, is sexual activity that is dominated by an attitude of immediate enjoyment (physical, mental, emotional, and/or spiritual), while outside purposes take a minor role. A premise of this book is the belief that *everyone can, at times, find the experience of play-dominated sexual activity to be positive, beneficial, and fun.*

Relearning to play is simply a matter of concentrating on the moment. You need not search out a personal guru: just visit the nearest playground or watch your own children at play. Maybe even join with them.

Try to imagine what it would be like to approach your partner's body with the same intensity, concentration, and attitude with which a six-year-old approaches a jungle gym. Climb on it. Slide down it. Press your cheek against it. Pretend that it's a mountain or a cave. Just lie on the ground and look up at it against the sky.

ANY NUMBER CAN PLAY

Just as a child can adapt almost any game to the number of kids who wish to play, so playful sex is compatible with any number of players.

One

Without doubt, you can play alone. In fact, sexual solitaire is the closest many people get to enjoying sex for its own sake. Men sometimes masturbate to increase their staying power during impending intercourse, and women might use a vibrator with the idea of learning how to

²This does not excuse the harm to self and others that can be caused when natural sexual desires are distorted by repression and cultivated in ignorance.

reach orgasm, but usually both sexes play with themselves solely because it feels so good. And that, of course, is a perfectly fine and wonderful reason.

Two

The joys of jerking-off are many, yet few people consistently prefer them to the fun of fucking. Still, the two-person interaction is automatically more susceptible to contamination by the work ethic than is the solo exercise. Any time two people are involved in a mutually satisfying activity, a relationship exists between them. Thus, all sexual interaction is somewhat relational and has elements of commitment, responsibility, role-playing, risk-taking, competition, memory association, future concerns, etc. Despite such characteristics, two-person sex can provide more fulfilling play than can masturbation due to the far greater variety of stimuli and actions available.

Three, Four, and More

The variety available to two folks is obviously less than that available to several (although there is a limit to the number of people who can physically interact at one time). The combinations and permutations increase the scope of your pleasure and can inspire greater concentration on the moment. So, the play element can be stronger in threesomes and moresomes than in twosomes.

Party Play

If you're searching for assistance in having playful sex with yourself or with one other person, you're reading the wrong book. Three or four people really enjoying each other's company might say that they were "having a party," but if you received an invitation to a party and found, upon arriving, that you were the only guests, you justifiably would feel misled. So, for our purposes, a party consists of at least three couples, usually more.

Furthermore, we're talking about couples that consist of one man and one woman (hetero- or bi-sexual) who are living together in a close, long-term relationship. Nevertheless, much within these pages is relevant to all types of interactions among people of every sexual persuasion and social lifestyle.

SWINGING TOGETHER

When we wrote the earlier version of this book, twenty-some years ago, we used the term "together sex" to convey the warm and exciting times that we enjoy sharing with others. Unsurprisingly, our linguistic invention never caught on. Most everyone at the time (and ever since) continued to refer to these activities as "swinging." Although the term is vague and has many negative connotations (see the next chapter) today we acquiesce to the unavoidable and call what we do "swinging." We have, however, kept our title, *Together Sex*, as a reminder that swinging enhances togetherness because it is an activity couples share together.

You will find many, widely varying definitions of swinging, even among its practitioners. After long and careful consideration, we find the following most descriptive and useful: "Swinging" describes activities involving consensual and conjoint participation in sexual interactions by a male-female couple with other couples. "Swingers," would therefore be people who enjoy such activities.

The people who attend sex parties are swingers. (If not, you've got yourself one very stressful party.) But other swinging activities (involving three or four people, for example) take place that are outside the scope of this book.

Single people are sometimes invited to join in the fun, but a single man or woman who claims to enjoy a "swinging lifestyle" is using the term in a different sense entirely.

SEX PARTY PERKS

Now if you are new to the idea of attending sexually playful parties, you might not immediately grasp how many good reasons there are for doing so. Here are a few of them.³

- Being around people in a playful mood makes it easier to become full of play and to stay that way.
- The occurrence of many sexual interactions creates a sexual excitement in the air that, in turn, can increase your excitement.

³These are not necessarily reasons to swing. For those, see our booklet, *Considering Swinging*, which is available at www.theswinginglife.com.

- At larger parties, the variety of possible sex partners available means that you and yours can each be with people who interest you individually.
- The larger the group of participants, the more likely someone will be in the mood to do whatever you want to do at any given moment.
- In a typical evening of four to six hours one will normally play at sex for only thirty to ninety minutes. A party can provide lots of interesting nonsexual ways to enjoy yourselves the remainder of the time.
- It is pleasant to have your attitudes reinforced by being with many "people like us" and basking in their acceptance. The winds of disapproval that blow against your door are harder to hear above the happy voices.

To us, swinging is sort of a game — a game that can promote camaraderie, communication, and growth, but that we play mostly for the joy of playing. A game in which no one keeps score. A game that is more enjoyable when more friends play. A game in which strangers are welcome (albeit cautiously, at times). A game that is great fun when almost everyone is in a good mood. A game that may occasionally be boring. A game that benefits from spontaneity and creativity among the players. A game with room for improvement. A game in which there is no more requirement for commitment and affection among players than there is in canasta or touch football. A game in which commitment and affection are welcome to develop and grow naturally between players.

In short, swinging is like many good games, only more fun.

Approached with the proper frame of mind, swinging can be a most enjoyable and life-enhancing activity for wife and husband to share — whether they are married or not. Yes, swinging has a pitiful public image (we'll discuss that next) but in our personal experience over more years than we care to tell, swinging has had a most positive effect on our lives and on the lives of many, many people we are proud to call friends.

Chapter 2

TROUBLE ON THE PLAYGROUND

"The image of swinging rendered by many studies to date is of a slightly compulsive, highly ritualized, totally impersonal, inevitably degrading set of behaviors which no self-respecting person could possibly find acceptable or attractive."

— James R. & Lynn C. Smith

Co-Marital Sex: The Incorporation of Extra-marital Sex into the Marriage Relationship.

If swinging is such good fun, why does it have such a crappy image? How does this image affect all of us who enjoy sex parties? And what, if anything can we, should we, do to make it better?

THE PUBLIC IMAGE OF A PRIVATE PRACTICE

Several theories have been proposed to explain how the term "swinging" became associated with group sexual interaction. The idea we like best is that the term refers to having the freedom to do what comes naturally, as in "we had full swing in the matter."⁴ Still, giving a positive twist to the origin of "swinging," isn't going to go very far toward overcoming the term's sleazy image; the task is a lot bigger than that.

Innumerable people who have never known the excitement, fun, and friendships of swinging seem absolutely anxious to heap the most vile abuse on those who dare admit to such experiences. Nevertheless, the friends of swinging are often as bad as its enemies. Publications claiming to represent the "swinging community" (whatever that is) usually exacerbate the sorry reputation of swinging.

The Reporters

To start with, let's see what America's weekly news magazines have to say about swinging.

"... couples who swing are incapable of intimate relationships even with each other and use wife-swapping as

a safety valve that keeps intimacy at a level each can tolerate."⁵

"... swinging often turns out to be joyless, mechanical and disassociative."⁶

"The growing popularity of swinging is testimony to man's infinite capacity for self-delusion."⁷

"[Swingers] all live in terror that their straight neighbors or relatives will learn the truth about their sex lives and dread even more discovery by their children."⁸

"Many [behavior experts] believe that participants are often emotionally disturbed, immature men and women whose sexual activities provide distraction but no solution to basic problems."⁹

No matter how you look at it, swinging has, over the years, received a consistently terrible press. How can this be? How can any activity so warm, so human, so exciting, so stimulating, etc., be so thoroughly misunderstood?

Well, sometimes, when pressed to meet deadlines, journalists will limit their investigations to reading whatever popular books or articles they find still unstolen from the public library. Those who do make an effort to do a few firsthand interviews and observations will almost always claim that the handful of people they contacted are typical of the entire subculture.

Also, journalists often will go to absurd lengths to give the *appearance* of balance and impartiality to their presentations. If one interviewee says that swinging is good, then someone must be found to claim that it stinks. The search for detractors is easy if you don't ask for qualifications.

We recall one, all too typical, journalist who managed to be fairly accurate in reporting his observations, yet devoted most of his lengthy article to extensive negative commentaries by three medical doctors, one Ph.D., and a rabbi. This morbid collection didn't have a single swinging experience among them, yet they had no qualms about analyzing the motives, tendencies, and presumed illnesses of swingers. This willingness to quote, if not promote, the sometimes offhand, often inane remarks of any readily available Reverend or Doctor is particularly saddening in reports on sexual behavior considering the pitifully small number of seminaries and

⁵"The American Way of Swinging," *Time* (Feb. 8, 1971) p. 51.

⁶"Group Sex," *Newsweek* (June 21, 1971) p. 99.

⁷"Swinging Future," *Time* (Jan. 8, 1973) p. 35.

⁸"Group Sex," *Newsweek* (June 21, 1971) p. 99.

⁹"Swinging Future," *Time* (Jan. 8, 1973) p. 35.

⁴For a bit more on this, see Appendix 3.

medical schools that offer even the most basic classes in human sexuality.

The Researchers

The media's job is made particularly difficult by the very people who are supposed to know something about swinging. Viewed *in toto*, the scientific papers on group sex seem an amazing pile of distortions, presumptions, and contradictions. We will not bore you by trying to sort through such a mess here. Instead we will briefly analyze one classic example.

In 1971, Gilbert D. Bartell produced a book titled *Group Sex: A Scientist's Eyewitness Report on the American Way of Swinging*. It deserves its recognition as the major investigatory work of its time, yet it is hardly gospel. For all of its breadth and depth, it contains examples of every common deficiency plaguing the majority of researchers. Many of these problems are difficult to avoid, but all contribute to the general misunderstanding and repudiation of swinging throughout our culture.

A key problem is access to the population to be studied. Some scientists have resorted to taking cases from the files of psychiatrists and marriage counselors. Bartell wisely rejected this approach as likely to produce a sampler of swinging misfits and general neurotics rather than of "average" participants. Unfortunately, the method he did select, and the method used by many investigators, also leads to gross distortions. *Group Sex* is based on a sampling of people in and around Chicago who were contacted by placing and answering ads in contact magazines.

We do not mean to imply that such people weren't swingers. Nevertheless, Bartell's population is definitely a minority type, and his survey reflects this bias. Repeatedly, those who are studied as "typical" participants in group sex are, in fact, merely the more open and available participants, and thus the easiest to find and question. In reality, most swingers rarely, if ever, reply to ads in magazines, and very few would consider discussing their lifestyle with an anthropologist. If they did, *Group Sex* would be a markedly different book.

Once the population is located, the anthropologist must decide how close to approach it. Bartell goes to considerable lengths justifying his use of the "participant-observer" method of research. Two pages later, however, he boldly admits: "Most of our party data comes from firsthand observation, and *none of it from direct participation.*"

(Emphasis ours.) And just why haven't he and his wife participated in this activity they have been so studiously observing? He answers directly: "It would have been repugnant to us."

Certainly we would not suggest that a criminologist must rob a few banks in order to comment upon the bank robber. On the other hand, we would not buy a book on French cuisine if its author admitted a repugnance for the dishes written about. To speak as though everyone will have sympathy for your nonparticipation makes it pretty clear that you think the activity is reprehensible and that you expect your readers to share your bias.

The Publicists

The written material most often thought to represent swinging is the contact magazine. While such periodicals have done much to advance the practice of group sex, they have simultaneously done much to create a terrible image of the participants in the public mind.

When someone first picks up a copy of a swinging magazine, they are unlikely to be impressed by the overall quality. Virtually all are printed on paper barely superior to newsprint. There are economic reasons for this, but the practicalities do not lessen the impact.

The shoddy impression is compounded greatly by the poor quality of photographic reproduction. The paper and the low budget are not solely to blame for this. Most of the people who advertise don't have the slightest understanding of good photography. The result of this is a magazine filled with dim, fuzzy pictures of people in awkward if not stupid poses. No art director in the world could salvage such a mess.

Insisting upon more professional photos from the advertisers might help, but this would drastically curtail the number of pictures per magazine, if not the number of ads. Publishers, typically, are more interested in selling space than in improving swinging's image.

Another problem is the lack of national brand-name advertising and the collateral income. This void being filled with obvious come-ons for shady-sounding distributors makes matters even worse.

A few editors try to break the monotony by including standard features such as editorials, short-short stories, cartoons, and informative articles. Usually they shouldn't have bothered. Readers expect the high-quality writing and illustration that major magazines pay big

bucks to get; no swinging magazine is willing, or able, to make a competitive investment.

All of these problems, of themselves, wouldn't be a very serious detriment to the image if it were not for the fact that such magazines promote themselves as the totality of swinging. Our experience supports the estimate that no more than five percent of the people who attend sex parties utilize these publications. Yet the person on the street is led to believe that the swinging scene is entirely populated by strange dudes who put naked pictures of themselves in sleazy magazines. It is sad.

Nowadays, many people are abandoning the printed page for pixelated communications via computer. Although this technology holds great promise, we fear that many of the same deficiencies endemic to print are being carried over to the Internet. Sites for swingers are all-too-often gaudy, tasteless, and amateurish. Poor-quality photos of awkward folks in degrading poses are not improved by high-speed, electronic transference. Reputable advertisers shun such sites just as completely as they shun the contact magazines, leaving little but sleazy banners for porno peddlers. And, the quality of the "articles" is generally worse than those in print; partly because the sites are run on even smaller budgets and partly because starting a web site requires no communications skills, training, or talent.

Note, please, that not all publishers and webmasters deserve such condemnation, but the prevailing shoddiness is a major contributor to the depressing image that plagues swingers around the world.

THE IMPACT ON YOU AND US

As the Smith's state in the quote at the beginning of this chapter, all this adds up to swinging being perceived by many people as a "degrading set of behaviors which no self-respecting person could possibly find acceptable." Such widespread public perception, we submit, is not just wrong and unfortunate, it has serious consequences — not only for practicing swingers, but for all people who love their personal freedoms.

To begin with, swinging's sleazy image discourages many fine people from trying the lifestyle. Generally, this means more frustrated people, more broken marriages, and less all-around playfulness throughout society. The direct, personal impact on you and us is a smaller pool of

sexually comfortable and adept people from which to draw new friends and fuck-buddies. This is bad.

Then there are all those meddlesome people trying to use the power of government to close down the clubs, censor the magazines, and even tell you what you may and may not do in your own bedroom and who you may and may not do it with. Swinging's negative image helps these control freaks by creating a climate conducive to repressive legal statutes and adverse court decisions. This is very bad.

The worst consequence of all, perhaps, is that when the media and academia keep telling us that we should be ashamed of ourselves, our self-image is bound to be wounded in ways that weaken our will to fight for our freedoms.

THE POLITICS OF SEXUAL SHAME

Ongoing competitions for dominance are pervasive in the governing structures of most mammalian species — someone always has to be "top dog" and boss everyone else around. Wolves and pumas and puppies and such have a limited repertoire of control techniques — stronger jaws and quicker claws are about all that one can employ to dominate another. We humans are way different. Early on, we exceeded all other life forms in devising methods to gain and exert control over one another.

Even back when humans lived in small tribes, searching the jungle for anything they might eat, or that might eat them, aggression and strength were not sufficient for maintaining power. No matter how tough you were when you took over the tribe, inevitably some young buck would come along and kick your butt out. The smartest chiefs quickly learned to postpone such involuntary retirement by controlling their tribes in other ways.

The way to get people to follow your commands is to constrain their ability to do something that is important to them. If you could, for example, ration the world's air supply so that everyone had to please you in order to breathe, then your power would be beyond calculation. This, of course, is because air is mankind's most critical natural need. Next in line is water, then food, and then a bunch of social and self-esteem needs, many of which involve sex.

Tribal chiefs couldn't control the world's air supply (although they might have forced the disfavored to sleep

near the less fragrant sections of camp). Water and food, being available most everywhere, proved tough to commandeer (at least until agriculture was invented and some chieftain had the nefarious notion that the land itself could be “owned”).

At first glance, controlling sexuality might seem a daunting task, after all, social interactions are not commodities that can be monopolized or restricted. Folks are going to follow their urges, despite the urging of their leaders. Yet humans are endlessly inventive, especially when it comes to lording it over other humans. So it didn’t take too long for leaders to discover that the key to keeping their subjects submissive wasn’t to prevent them from doing this or that, but to make them believe that doing this or that was shameful. Most folks call this practice “religion” but it’s really just sexual politics.

Now, we realize that you didn’t pick up this book to study politics, but politics is really the craft of gaining and maintaining power over others. So, if you care at all about enjoying your freedom — sexual and otherwise — please take a moment to consider the coercive power of shame. Your fellow swingers need you to understand this.

- ⊗ Shame lowers self-image, thus giving a relatively higher image to the leader. *“The worse I look to myself, the better the chief looks.”*
- ⊗ Shame helps convince people to accept their lot in life. *“I have bad thoughts, so I am a bad person, and I deserve to be treated poorly by the chief.”*
- ⊗ Shame is a feeling of wrongness that spreads throughout one’s psyche and undermines confidence. *“If I’m wrong about this, I might be wrong about that, so I should not question my leaders.”*
- ⊗ Shame causes confusion and uncertainty. *“I don’t even know how I got so sinful. How can I be sure that any solution or program is good or bad? Who am I to make value judgments?”*
- ⊗ Shame promotes feelings of impotency. *“My inability to overcome my sinful nature shows that I am weak, proving that I don’t have the strength to fight the system successfully.”*
- ⊗ Shame inhibits the interpersonal communication necessary to resist tyranny. *“I don’t want people to notice me because they might notice my perversion, so I won’t speak out to protect my rights.”*
- ⊗ Shame leads to isolation, so there is no strength in numbers. *“If I join this organization or movement, my guilt may become known, so I’ll just keep to myself.”*

In summary, people who are ashamed of their own actions, urges, or fantasies, can be uncertain, vulnerable,

compliant, and isolated; making them more easily manipulated, misled, intimidated, and impoverished. Therefore, dictators, priests, and other sorts of tyrants work long and hard to convince each and every one of us that we should be ashamed of ourselves.

FIGHTING BACK

We are not suggesting that all swingers come out of the bedroom closet and proclaim the value of playful party sex at their next community meeting. We realize that swinging is really more of a recreational activity than a “lifestyle” — no matter how much that phrase is bandied about — so the motivation to be “true to our inner nature” and “stand up for our human rights” isn’t as strong as it is for some other groups, such as gays or even transsexuals. Nevertheless, as we’ve tried to point out above, play is very important, sex is nothing to be ashamed of, and the freedom to be sexually playful is anathema to despots. So, let us fight for our sexual freedoms, as shrewdly as our intellect allows and as subtly as our circumstances demand.

The most important thing you can do is to increase your awareness of the ways government, media, and academia restrict your sexual rights and freedoms. (You’ve made a good start just by reading this chapter.) Then share your awareness with others. You don’t have to preach to people or “get serious” mid-orgy. If you are open to them, you will find moments in many social situations when preserving sexual freedoms is both an appropriate and welcome topic for conversation. Don’t shy away from such conversations because you fear that people only appreciate your fun-loving side. If more swingers don’t start being concerned about these issues, our fun times and our loving times will all be outlawed.

It would be particularly appropriate, effective, and wonderful for you to urge everyone you know to buy and read this book. But that, of course, is just our opinion.

When you discover an impending legislative action that threatens your freedoms, make a sacrifice of the 15 minutes it takes to write a simple note to the appropriate legislators and let them know what you think. You don’t have to reveal your own lifestyle to lend your voice in support of personal freedoms. The phrase has been quoted so often that it’s almost a cliché, but it remains vitally true: The price of liberty *is* eternal vigilance.

Another thing you can do is give your support (anonymously if necessary) to groups that promote free lifestyles — not only to swinger's groups (which, unfortunately, are few and frail) but all those who seek to loosen the grip that governments have on our genitals.

One group that every swinger should be a member of is the American Civil Liberties Union. As stated on the ACLU web site: "In every era of American history, the government has tried to expand its authority at the expense of individual rights. The American Civil Liberties Union exists to make sure that doesn't happen, and to fight back when it does."

You probably don't always agree with every stance the ACLU takes — we don't either. But neither will we let disagreement on a couple of particulars prevent us from supporting their general aims and methods. If you think some things should be done differently, join and contribute your views.

The United States of America is a bastion of liberty not because of its geography, or its climate, or even its residents; what made this country free and keeps it free is one extraordinary document — the Constitution. Over the past eight decades, no one has supported and defended the Constitution of the United States better or longer than the American Civil Liberties Union. If you're not already a member, check it out immediately; join it as soon as possible.

Contact the ACLU via the Internet at www.aclu.org or look up the number for your local ACLU affiliate in your phone directory.

Another group you ought seriously to consider supporting is Americans United for the Separation of Church and State [www.au.org]. Please note that this is not an atheist organization, nor even anti-religion. Many of its members are, in fact, church leaders.

We were taught in elementary school that the Puritans and other religious groups came to colonial America seeking freedom from religious persecution. The truth is a bit different: many of these groups were encouraged to leave England because *they were intolerant* of other religious views. They came here seeking a domain where their dogma could reign supreme. The barriers between church and state in this country were erected only after various competing religions realized that they weren't going to be able to dominate the country, and grew fearful that some other sect would gain enough power to

kick them out again. So, the First Amendment wording on religion was devised mainly to protect churches, not from atheists and secular humanists, but from each other.

Today, many religious leaders realize that this separation is about the only thing keeping a powerful group of right-wing religious fanatics from forcing changes that could lead to domination by one particular church. That is why these enlightened leaders support AU. Swingers would do well to add their support to this effort, as fundamentalist religions have always been extraordinarily destructive to sexual freedoms.

Remember, the first step to enjoying a better sex party is to live in a place where you won't get in trouble for attending a sex party.

Please do something to help promote sexual freedom.

Chapter 3

REACHING OUT

Getting people together has come a long way from the matchmaker immortalized in *Fiddler on the Roof*. Today, hundreds of individuals and companies want to unite you with potential friends and separate you from your money. Some are rip-offs; some provide a legitimate service for a fair price.

As you reach out to touch all those wonderful someones waiting for you, we wish you all the luck in the world, and offer a few suggestions.

But first, a caveat about all our offerings:

RULES OF THE GAME

Guidelines for human conduct that are designed to smooth and facilitate interactions often grow into stifling rules that have the opposite effect. The different personalities involved make each encounter a unique experience, so no one can predict with certainty what will be best in a particular situation. Thus, we approach the subject of etiquette with trepidation.

We are motivated by the recognition that, first, what to do is a primary concern of the beginner, and, second, an unfortunate number of experienced participants give themselves and swinging a bad reputation by never seeming to be aware that there are limitations to their actions, even in the “free” atmosphere of a party.

The recommendations we offer here are certainly not all-inclusive nor ironclad. Many of our readers will disagree with some of our statements, and perhaps some will disagree with all of our statements. It is not that we wish to impose standardization, but that we hope to stimulate serious consideration of the points raised in order to heighten your awareness of how useful your personal rules are and how well they are reflected by your actions.

IN WRITING

For decades, the biggest and best-known purveyors of public pen-pals were the contact magazines. But their number greatly declined as newspapers across the country began to dedicate space to personal ads, and now the

Internet threatens them with extinction. Nevertheless, as of this writing, a few magazines still serve those who do not have access to the Net and prefer personals with pictures.

Depending upon your geographic location and experience, you may consider social contact magazines and web sites to be trash or treasure. If you live near a large metropolitan area and have numerous contacts, you might never understand why so many people pay good money to pose for every lecher who wears an overcoat to the adult bookstore. But if you're stuck in the foothills of Nowhere Mountain, or if you're new to the scene, magazines could be your best option.

Even couples who have found a satisfactory bar or party network on their own sometimes place an ad. They might be merely curious, or they hope to find others who aren't aware of the clubs and who are too timid to place an ad themselves. Often, the response is disappointing.

Things aren't much better for those who choose to respond to ads that look inviting or even interesting. Despite the claims of circulation editors and webmasters, a lot of letters go unanswered.

Even so, many people have made enjoyable and worthwhile contacts through magazine and Internet advertisements. If you are concerned about being seen at a swinger's hangout (or you can't find one near your home) and you haven't managed to break into a party circuit, by all means try the ads.

Getting the Most Out of Your Ad

Send a Picture: We don't know of any reliable statistics, but our own experience backs up what the editors tell us; you will receive at least two or three times the number of responses to your ad if it has a picture than if it doesn't. This is true even if you aren't exceptionally attractive. No matter how pudgy, flat, or misshapen you might be, someone out there is likely to lust after you. On the other hand, few people have the talent to write ads that are provocative enough to be successful without visual aids.

Send a High-Quality Picture: The printing process of a contact magazine (as cheap as possible since they have few major advertising accounts) will diminish the quality of any photograph. So, start with the best you can. No one looks good in a fuzzy, dark picture. If the ad will be published in black and white, it's better to use black-and-white pictures, as color is never as sharp and the beautiful

red and green contrast will melt into a blah gray lump when printed. Don't forget that the size of the print has nothing to do with sharpness. It is the precision of the lens and the size of the negative that count. Best bet is to find a friend who *really* knows something about photography to do it for you.

Send a Tasteful Picture: Many people seem to go out of their way to achieve the most pompous or lewd postures they can twist their naked bodies into. Don't ask us why, we don't know. Let's face it, if you aren't attractive with your clothes on, you aren't going to improve things by removing the covers. Besides, nudity in and of itself, isn't all that sexy. An alluring bikini is fine if you're built for it, but nothing is wrong with normal clothing. We suggest you dress for a photograph the same way you would dress to meet someone in person.

Some claim that nudity is insurance against fakery (padded bras, crotches, and supportive devices). Don't believe it. Anything *can* be faked, and, anyway, a reader has no guarantee that the picture is actually of the person placing the advertisement.

If you are worried about being recognized, turn your head away from the camera. Don't hide behind a large dildo or merely cut the top off the photo. If you are not sure how to pose, get a photography magazine or book that has figure studies and copy one you like.

Pose Both of You: This is our personal opinion and is obviously not shared by the majority of advertisers, although we like to think that this is only a matter of their following an equally misguided crowd. The practice of only the female half of a couple being displayed to viewers is what makes people look like wife-swappers. The advertiser seems to be bartering, "This is what I have to offer, isn't she juicy? What prime tidbit do you have to trade?" This, of course, degrades everyone. Your respondents are going to see both of you eventually, why postpone the shock?

Don't Use Buzz Words: Using descriptive terms that are relative and subjective (such as, "attractive," "young," "slender," "selective," etc.) wastes ad space and communicates nothing.

Be Truthful: Each year various activities seem to be "in" for advertisers. If every couple who write that they love to ski ever got to the slopes, the lodge owners would all

be millionaires by now and have gone to live in the Virgin Islands. Don't say you love to travel if your last trip was to Disneyland in your new '82 Ford. Don't say you are looking for lifelong friendships if you really mean you're horny.

Find Yourself: Most magazines and many websites group advertisers by state. The problem with this is that a town can be many hours drive from another town in the same state and yet very near another town in a different state. Save yourself and others a bit of effort by putting a more exact location in your ad. One way to give a good sense of where you live without risking exact identification is to include your telephone area code. But be sure to identify it as an area code, so readers don't think it's your weight or your hip size or something more bizarre.

Reveal Legitimate Preferences: If you know from experience that some particular popular pastime is unacceptable to you, it will be worth your while to state your attitude in your ad. For instance, if you get violently ill at the very thought of tobacco smoke, you should spend a few extra pennies and include "nonsmokers only" or whatever. On the other hand, don't waste your money including lines like "no fatties" or "no weirdos." Potential respondents will never apply such phrases to themselves; you'll just come across as a bit snotty.

Don't Be Overly Restrictive: We know more than one couple who look, think, and act ten-to-twenty years younger than they are—and we know a few who have aged far beyond their years. We also know several couples who have discovered a liking for practices that they once thought were out of bounds. So, stating specific age limits or prohibiting particular practices can unnecessarily limit your opportunities for fun times. You should be true to yourselves, but keep in mind that healthy individuals are constantly changing. So, stay as loose and open as you can. It's more fun that way.

Go Ahead and Copy: If you have trouble writing your ad, copy the phrases you find attractive in other ads—providing, of course, that they are true for you.

Don't Be Stingy: The letters SASE (Self-Addressed Stamped Envelope) are pompous and insulting. Anyone too busy and/or too cheap to take the time and buy the postage to respond to a letter of ours is someone we do not wish to meet.

IN PERSON

Many couples considering swinging have placed or answered an ad primarily because doing so takes less courage than going to a swinging bar or social and meeting all those uncommon strangers face-to-face. Then, they receive an enticing response and realize that they are going to have that first, up-close and in-person meeting anyway, and it's just as intimidating as going to a bar would have been, if not more so.

If you are seeking contacts and have a bar, party house, or social-event location within reach, we recommend you go ahead and visit the place and let nature take her course. You can always spend hours combing ads on the Net or in the mags if things don't work out in the real world. Of course, if you don't enjoy dances, bars, or parties, then you should ignore this advice; although we can't fathom why you'd be reading it in the first place.

We have found no two clubs to be alike. Some encourage, others tolerate, and still others prohibit singles. Some will allow singles only with the same partner; others restrict membership to married couples. Many have liquor licenses, some sell booze sans authorization, and others don't allow any drinking at all. The most nearly universal prohibition is that against drugs (other than alcohol and nicotine).

Clubs that organize private parties where sex is encouraged or accepted rarely present the guest with any problems or opportunities that he or she would not encounter at a party given by an individual friend, so we'll reserve until later any comments we have about interactions at such gatherings. For now, we will stick to a few words on navigating those "off-premise" bars and socials designed to enable strangers to become acquaintances.

A nation of letter writers we may not be, but party-goers and pub-frequenters we most definitely are. In recognition of this, our discussion will dispense with such basics as we emphasized in the preceding section on ad writing, and concentrate on a few refinements of making contacts at bars and socials.

Your reaction upon entering a bar (a term we will use to mean any nightclub or social scene dedicated to contacts between swingers) for the first time will be a personal response that we have no way of predicting. Whether you feel like a kid in a candy store or like a civil rights worker at a Klan meeting, your actions will be

influenced by one overriding factor. Deep down inside you, a voice keeps repeating, "Everybody is here to get laid!"

The remarkable thing is that in the average swinger's bar that voice is generally correct. BEWARE, you must exercise caution and not let this knowledge wipe all cultural conditioning from your brain.

On most counts, a bar is like any other nightclub. The general etiquette that you learned in your teens will guide you nicely. The exceptions lie in the greater freedom you have to start a conversation or dance with someone's spouse without the risk of getting your cheeks scratched or your nose bloodied.

Two tasks are particularly tricky for most novices: the initial introduction, and the first invitation to go home.

Hi There!

We have been going to a particular bar for so long that it seems like coming home every time we walk through the door. Here, we may just walk up to a new couple and easily begin a conversation. Such confidence comes only with time and pleasant reinforcing experiences. When we are in a different city and enter a bar that is new to us we feel the normal apprehensions that affect any newcomers. Some modification of the strategy we have developed for new situations may be useful to you.

We always try to arrive at a new place soon after the festivities begin so that the crowds don't prevent easy maneuvering. Once past the doorkeeper, we use some excuse to wander around without being too obtrusive, such as going to the toilet, getting a drink, finding the cigarette machine, etc. We look for a table that we consider "good": this means a group of appealing people who seem comfortably at home and who are talkative and enjoying themselves. We sit at the nearest empty table and wait.

Permitting ourselves only a few longing glances at our "target" table, we try to look relaxed and friendly and obviously alone. With luck, someone will come over and introduce him/herself.

Such a passive approach may seem slow, but it makes up in quality what it lacks in speed. The person who has the interest, concern, and confidence to approach us and, if things work out, invite us over to his or her table, is probably worth waiting for. He or she is

almost certainly an extrovert who knows many people and has a solid understanding of the local *modus operandi*. Thus we have attained a good "in" without ever seeming too forward or interrupting a private scene.

When this technique works, it works well. Sometimes it fizzles. A couple just as new and alone as you might decide that you don't look very threatening and choose to sit next to you. Beware of your natural tendency to band together in a retreat from the emotional threats of a strange crowd. Try, of course, to be friendly and make some investment in future contacts if desired. Then find some excuse to move so that you can begin phase two when possible.

We begin phase two whenever an hour or so have gone by and no one has been impressed enough by our charms to come over and speak to us. The procedure is more obvious than complex. It involves walking over to a table with a couple of empty places and politely asking those seated if they would mind if we joined them. Not very original, we admit, but it beats hell out of standing in a corner all night and going back to your motel to watch tv re-runs. If there is a bar, you may choose to remain standing and simply say hello to whomever walks by.

Being cute, funny, or even charming is not a requirement. Your intended acquaintances have paid their admission for the same reason you have — to meet people. Remember that, but don't let it make you lazy.

Remember also that you aren't simply meeting one person; you are meeting a couple. Here's where your prior training may betray you. Let's say that you are a guy who has spotted a great-looking girl sitting with this fellow across the room. In bygone days your instincts would have strongly suggested that you wait until Mr. X goes to the toilet before you attempt to move in on sweet-young-thing. Ignore those instincts.

Mr. X is not your competition, he is a potential friend — treat him like one. Don't even ask sweet-young-thing to dance until you have introduced yourself and established some sort of communication with both of them. It's okay, at times, to split up and move around a bit without your wife or date, but don't start acting like a single on the prowl.

The same advice holds for gals who want to dance (or whatever) with Mr. Hunk. Being friendly with his date first is both polite and wise.

Once the salutations and introductions are over, it is time to show your skill at the dying art of conversation. There are many stock questions that even the most experienced people rely upon when faced with new situations. "Do you come here often?" "Do you live near here?" "Do you know many people here?" Such questions are acceptable, yet they are poor conversation starters.

If you find a conversation already started to which you can contribute intelligently, do so. If you must initiate the chatter there are other options besides inquiring into your newfound friends' personal lives. Try asking for opinions instead of facts. For example: "Do you prefer extra males at a party or extra females?" or "Have you read any good books on swinging?" [hint, hint] Once you hit the right button, simply listen attentively and you will surely become known as a great conversationalist.

The Big Question

Depending upon the hours of operation, the geographic location, and the traditions of any particular bar, it might be a launching pad for all night parties or merely a place to exchange telephone numbers. You get someone's phone number by simply asking for it. Getting invited to a late party sometimes demands more finesse. Always being where the action is takes a little talent and a lot of practice. Here are two small but important tips.

First, keep your objective in mind from the beginning. Long before the bar closes, let people know that you're interested in attending a party.

Second, never use pressure or leave anyone with no way out. Ask people to let you know if anything is happening that they feel you may fit into. Don't just ask if they are going to a party. We've said it before, and we'll say it again, but we'll still say it now: The use of pressure is never suitable in a swinging situation! Even if you are not at all bothered by rejection, the person you're asking may not be comfortable having to say no. Making people feel comfortable is the best route to popularity.

Misinterpretation

One last observation about the people you meet in bars, it is our experience that 90 percent of the time people act stuck-up, they are really just shy.

IN PERSPECTIVE

Contact publications and social clubs are useful points of access into the swinging community. Most couples who earn modest popularity soon move away from heavy reliance upon ads and semipublic clubs toward more personal friendship networks. Now and again they will answer an ad or visit a nightclub to expand their circle of friends or to check on how "the old crowd" is doing. Likely as not, the old crowd isn't there much anymore. Such shifting around, combined with a plethora of curiosity seekers and tourists in our mobile world, exaggerates the impression of transience.

Magazines, the Internet, and clubs might not be exactly what you are looking for, but they can be important steps toward finding it.

Chapter 4

RESPONDING

Some people find it easy and enjoyable to initiate the action; others tend to sit back and wait to be contacted. Whatever style you gravitate toward, there are going to be many situations in which you are called upon to respond to an overture or direct invitation. We herein offer some guidance on written correspondence (be it e-mail or snail-mail), telephone talk, and face-to-face interactions.

DROP ME A LINE

Whether you are answering an ad or replying to a response from your own ad, you will benefit greatly from mastering a few basic techniques of letter (note/e-mail) writing. Beyond the following recommendations we dare not tread. Whatever creativity, eroticism, or humor you put into your letters must come from you alone. If something strikes you as even slightly inappropriate, leave it out. Chances are it isn't you and would come across as fabricated.

The Message

The Personal Touch: When posting a letter in response to an ad, the warmth and intimacy of longhand is preferable to machine-produced typography. The need for legibility, however, takes precedence. If your scrawl is unreadable, go ahead and use the keyboard.

Don't Duplicate: We have actually known some people to write out their letter in longhand and then make copies for posting. Needless to say, we never bothered responding. If their time were so valuable, how could we expect them to spend any of it getting to know us? This ban does not apply, naturally, to party invitations and other mass mailings.

Keep it Brief: Don't give the impression that you have nothing better to do than spend all day writing letters. Strong urges to write should be channeled into stories for publication. You might even get paid for your efforts.

Keep it Simple: This isn't the time to exhibit your knowledge of English literature or French slang.

Don't Be Too Anxious: The people to whom you are writing want you to write and want you to express an interest in meeting them. If this wasn't so, they wouldn't have initiated the contact in the first place. Thus you needn't wax ecstatic over their potential and pretend that seeing them is the most important thing in the world. If you are interested, say so nicely and wait for a response. The usual result of a strong advance is a hasty retreat.

Don't Be Crude: Saying you like to fuck is fine (although probably unnecessary). Saying that your mother-in-law is a fucking pain in the ass is a poor comment on your command of adjectives — not to mention your command of your life.

Pictures Again: Essentially, the same points made in the previous section apply. Send a recent, tasteful, high-quality photo of the two of you. Later on you may decide to trade more explicit views, but don't forget that some mail gets inspected and few Internet connections are secure.

Describe Yourself: Your house, your boat, and your measurements may be of some interest, but your personality is the most important. How do you spend your time? What books and movies have you enjoyed recently? Do you like games? Sports? Family picnics? Maybe you aren't looking for friends to play backgammon with, but your taste in activities is a valuable clue to your general personality.

If You Are Shy: Those who don't wish to reveal their address or telephone number immediately might consider using one of several available private mail, e-mail, and telephone message forwarding services. We hesitate to recommend any one in particular, so watch for their ads on the Net and in the contact magazines.

Quantity

Being disheartened by the response to one's letters is often the result of failing to send enough. If you only answer one advertisement, don't get too excited when the mail carrier comes.

The number of letters you should send is dependent upon your overall desirability and your ability to communicate via pen and paper. If you are a stunning couple who use a professional photographer and you write nicely, you may respond to four well-selected ads

and receive three replies. If you are mostly average, you ought to get 50- to 60-percent return. If you are a single male with a penmanship problem, better send out at least a hundred letters. Once you have weeded out the cranks and prostitutes you might have one or two good possibilities left.

Whatever your situation, don't be crushed if you don't at first succeed. Analyze every step and try again. Believe us! Somebody out there wants to play with you. It's up to you to find them.

Junk Mail

Your correspondence with any particular contact may never yield anything tangible. There are a wide variety of people placing and answering ads in contact magazines and web sites, and many have no real intention of actually sharing a physical experience with you.

Lonely Hearts correspondence clubs being the drab bores that they are, it isn't surprising that a few folks with time on their hands figure that writing to "Anxious in Albany" is more exciting than playing solitaire. These people are harmless enough, we suppose, if you don't mind reading about Aunt Maude's new pressure cooker *ad nauseam*.

Sometimes these pen-pals are truly interested in swinging — in theory. They will write any fantastic story they expect you might swallow if they can only receive your true confessions in return. Again harmless, but if you're going to write masturbation aids, you ought to be getting paid for your efforts.

Then there are those who are sincerely interested in meeting you, but can never quite get up the nerve. They may even set up appointments, knowing all the while that they will never keep them. These folks can waste a lot of your time if you don't spot them quickly. If they don't show up for your initial meeting, reschedule for some activity that will be a success whether they show or not.

A particularly obnoxious type of fraud is the person (sometimes female but mostly male) who writes without the permission or knowledge of their spouse. We have great sympathy for their predicament, yet we see no excuse for their actions. They don't need you, unless you are a marriage counselor.

Of course there are those who seek to remove a bulge from men's pants, not give them one. As you already know by now, there are people everywhere after

your wallet. Neither the Internet nor contact magazines are neutral territory. Anyone can pose as a couple or as a lovely, lonely woman. Don't ever send money to anyone on the basis of a personal letter, no matter whose picture it contains.

Prostitutes and models aren't the only cause of trouble. Occasionally a jilted boyfriend gets the bright idea of gaining vengeance on his gone girl by placing her picture over a particularly suggestive ad. Magazines cannot stop anyone willing to fraudulently sign someone else's name to a photograph. So keep your cool and minimize mail-order commitments.

A Note on Saying No

Unless you own a foolproof crystal ball, the time will come when you must deny the advances of an interested party. The only thing worse than writing a letter of rejection is receiving one. In fact people get so uncomfortable merely thinking about the dirty deed that they sometimes become impatient and callous. We have no instant pain relievers, only a few small suggestions.

First, be absolutely sure of your decision and the reasons for making it. Then write the letter immediately. Procrastination only makes you feel worse, which doesn't help your correspondence technique.

Don't be insulting, rude, or offensive. Most of all, don't lie. Being honest, however, does not mean revealing your every thought. For example, if the photo you receive shows a man who looks exactly like someone who raped you when you were twelve, you are not bound to tell him so. It's your perception and your problem, not his. Why not say something like, "We're sorry, but personal difficulties prevent us from seeing you at this time." This is the truth, but it shouldn't hurt very much.

One last important point: always sign your letters. A letter we once received in reply to our response to an ad is now hanging framed on our den wall. It is a constant reminder to us of the need for consideration when dealing with others. We aren't upset about the rejection it contains, and only somewhat bothered by the author's complete misinterpretation of our initial letter. But, two things appall us. The letter was typed, and there at the bottom where one's signature belongs is naught but a code number.

To know that you have been considered and rejected by unknown minds is bad enough. When there is a good

chance that you will meet someday and they will know you, but you won't know them, *that* is infuriating. Such people should have very sensitive parts of their bodies sandpapered. If you are not honest enough and strong enough to reject people in your own name, then you are not good enough to initiate such contacts in the first place.

LET'S GET TOGETHER

First impressions don't last forever. Each person has to get to know people and make himself known at his own rate. Everybody could probably name several people who left no positive impression at their first meeting, but with whom they later developed a strong friendship. Nevertheless, when contacting people by letter or other indirect means, the initial meeting is important. If most things don't work out the first time, the likelihood of a second chance is small.

If you spot an appealing someone at a club or within a party circuit, you can observe him or her over time and approach as slowly as you desire. Temporary problems, such as someone being in an unusually bad mood, or having a rare argument with his date, or being uncharacteristically drunk on a particular occasion, may not seem so critical in the long run. Unfortunately, the circumstances surrounding your first meeting with an Internet or magazine contact are not so forgiving. Each of the four of you (or three of you) must be in good form.

The following points may guide you in your first encounter, but common sense is your best compass.

Expectations: You are justified in expecting your new contacts to appear as a reasonable facsimile of their photographs and to have some knowledge of the topics they discussed in their correspondence. In addition, it is not too much to expect that they exhibit a modicum of social skills. Beyond these basics, be cautious of initial critical thoughts. The fewer expectations you harbor the better your odds are of having a satisfying social encounter. One thing you should never expect is sexual interaction on your first date. If it happens, sex should be a pleasant surprise, not a presumed exercise.

Baggage: Don't involve pets or children or anyone else in your first meeting. A visit to Uncle John in New York might be a good time to have dinner with a new contact in Fun City. But leave Uncle John at home when you go,

no matter how liberal he might be. If you must be so encumbered, make sure that your contacts are alerted in time to bail out gracefully.

Finances: Until proven otherwise, assume that the couple you are meeting has less money to spend than you have.

Facades: Be totally honest about your likes and dislikes. Your new acquaintances will feel more relaxed if you seem open and trustworthy, even if you are not perfectly compatible with their lifestyle.

Over-preparation: Exercise extreme caution with alcohol at all times, particularly before your first meeting. Being a little nervous is better than being intoxicated. Too many evenings have already been ruined because someone's "medicine" made them sick.

Impositions: Treat a new couple as you would any friendly strangers. Don't assume that because you share an interest in sex you don't have to take the time to become friends before acting in a way that may be considered an imposition. *You* may not mind someone automatically moving into your motel room or inviting themselves to stay for dinner, but chances are good that others will mind very much.

Discretion: Comments and conversation about sexual experiences should be limited to private places. True, your new friends are liberal thinkers. However, they may not want everyone in the restaurant to hear about last night's action. Surely you can think of something else to talk about.

Attitude: Don't act as if you are doing them a favor by being with them. If you do, you aren't!

COME HOME WITH US

If you are at a club or bar and you receive an invitation to go home with a group or another couple, respond honestly. If you are not sure whether or not you wish to go, ask how soon they need to know. If you must decide immediately, do so, and stick with your decision.

Never say you're coming if you're not. Never say you can't make it and then turn around and show up. Never say you're too tired if you actually plan to go elsewhere.

This is simple honesty, and simple honesty is basic courtesy.

We know of more than one couple who will continually say that they are coming, carefully take down directions, and then go home instead. We are personally convinced that their actions are more a result of trepidation than deceit. However, understanding this doesn't really change things. People who admit to misgivings and sexual fears are far more pleasant to deal with than people who are obviously liars.

Being certain of the exact location of the party is wise. We will never forget a forty-five-minute early-morning drive through the unfamiliar countryside of Georgia to reach a house that was supposed to be "just down the road."

Should someone ask you for your telephone number, again, please reply honestly. If you don't want to give it to them, say so and explain why. If your reason is simply that you don't like the person, realize that you haven't had sufficient opportunity to be impressed with their good aspects and truthfully reply, "I don't think that we are ready to do that yet," or something similar. If the person is obtuse enough to question your reply, be painfully clear or fabricate an unchallengeable excuse. In other words, don't lie unless you are forced to, and then come as close to the truth as possible. The best approach is probably to go ahead and give them your number. You can always turn them down if they call. They may not call at all. Besides, you just might change your mind. Whatever you do, don't give out a false number. Inconsiderate twits who do so hurt everyone else's good name.

COME TO MY PARTY

When an invitation to a sex party arrives via e-mail or snail-mail, it will usually specify the type of response expected. Given time to consider your desires privately you will probably meet those expectations to everyone's satisfaction. However, most invitations are made by telephone. Should you be interrupted in the middle of wiping up the baby's vomit or changing the oil in your car, you may not automatically come up with the optimum response. A little forethought can prevent many misunderstandings.

Be Positive: Give your host a firm answer if at all possible. If you say you'll call back, be specific about when and be sure to do so.

Curiosity: Never ask who else is going to attend the party. For one thing, you might be the first couple called, so your hosts really can't say. On the other hand, if they name a long list of people, you'll have to face the likelihood that you're on the bottom of that list. Really though, a request to "see the menu" is depersonalizing and insulting to your host and to the other guests. If you don't trust your host's judgment, don't attend. If the appearance of one particular couple at a party will ruin your night, go see a therapist instead.

As the host, should someone ask you who else will be attending, say: "Several good friends and great people!"

Sometimes people we invite will ask: "Will there be anyone else there that we know?" Usually, we will try to answer their query truthfully and politely, but what we really want to say (rather loudly) is: "How are we supposed to know whom you know?" followed by "Aren't you in this lifestyle to meet new people?"

Contributions: Always ask if you can bring anything. And always mean it. Unless they specifically tell you differently or are otherwise positive, always assume that you should take your own alcoholic beverages.

Additional Guests: If you wish to bring another couple, be sure to notify your host in advance and get approval. Also, be sure to arrive with the other couple and be prepared to leave with them if things do not work out. Anyone you personally invite is your responsibility.

Date of the Month: Always inform the host if you intend to refrain from sexual play because your period is due (or for any other reason). If you are requested to attend anyway, go ahead (as long as it doesn't bother you). If your host says something like, "Oh, that's too bad," then stay home.

Be Appreciative: Regardless of your availability or of your opinion of the host, thank the caller sincerely. You have been paid a real compliment; respond in kind.

Chapter 5

PARTYING

Sex parties are for fun. Your pleasure is your business. There is no sense in us telling you how you ought to seek it. Nevertheless, your actions at a party are everybody's business. Thus we might mention a few things to keep in mind that can help you enjoy yourself by reducing the possibilities of alienating your host and the other guests.

ATTENDING

Once a party is underway, you have certain obligations to the host and to the party in general. Be concerned with these if you want to be invited back again and again.

Coming

Being prompt is more important at swinging gatherings than at most other social activities. It is far better to be the first couple to arrive, and sit around watching the hosts get dressed, than to distract partiers by walking into the middle of the action. That is, *if* you're allowed to walk in at all. The latecomer may find all the doors and windows secured for the duration. If you must arrive late, call beforehand and make arrangements.

Going

Some younger guests, particularly those without small children, are known for their tendency to hang around until dawn. Your hosts have gone to some trouble to make you comfortable and enhance your pleasure, and perhaps they will be complimented by your staying all night. But perhaps not. Be alert to whatever hints may be given. A good guide: if over one-half of the guests have departed and you have not been specifically invited to stay longer — leave.

Possessiveness

We deal at length with jealousy elsewhere in this book. Few indeed are so self-confident as to be entirely free of such anxiety at all times. You shouldn't ignore jealous feelings, but during a party is not the time for dealing with them. Not even if a sympathetic someone encourages you to "let it all hang out." Save your outbursts for discussion groups or the pillow on your bed at home. If

you can't control such feelings, you shouldn't be at the party. Nothing short of a visit from the district attorney will ruin a swinging party quicker than an exhibition of possessiveness.

Monopoly

Every party scene has a limited amount of area suitable for sexual activities. Don't keep others from passing Go by resting your piece on one space for too long. This goes double for the Water Works.

Cooperation

At any given time each of us has a personal preference for operating procedures. When your hosts are obviously into a different thing, try to play it their way despite your prior expectations. New and unusual situations are pleasant surprises much more often than they are unexpected disasters. You can do it your way the next time you get together, when you're the host.

Tricks

Fun and games have their place — practical jokes don't.

The Primary Bond

Whether you have been married for thirty years or you just met your date that evening, you are a unit for the duration of the party. This means that if your partner has any sort of problem — injury, intoxication, impotency — it is *your* obligation to provide aid and comfort and to suggest leaving if necessary. Don't allow the burden to fall upon your hosts or whomever your partner happens to be with when the difficulty becomes apparent.

Seclusion

The permissibility or advisability of shutting the bedroom door behind you is obvious if you are certain that most of the guests are committed either to open or closed interactions. Odds are that no such majority will exist. A few guidelines may thus be helpful. (1) If other people are already in an open room, leave it open. (2) Don't shut others out if there is more than one bed in the room. (3) If the proportion of people to beds is high, be willing to share. (4) You have an often acceptable requirement for privacy if your partner is a shy novice. (5) Should your partner make a direct request, why not comply?

Normally, it is in poor taste to *lock* a door. Whatever your decision, always bow to the wishes of your host.

Photography

Few activities arouse stronger opinions and feelings than the taking of pictures at a party. Whether you are holding a video, digital, or film camera, make sure you have explicit and uncoerced approval from each guest before pointing it at anyone or your Kodak moment might become a catastrophe.

Big Scenes

If someone does or says anything that offends you, react pleasantly or move away. Shouting and violence are never excusable. People naturally feel a bit vulnerable at a swinging function. What, under normal circumstances, would be merely a bothersome warning by the police to keep the noise down becomes far more troublesome in the midst of an orgy.

Common Sense

In swinging, as in most social situations, certain actions are consistently frowned upon. Never be insulting, get uncontrollably drunk, be loud, or use the carpet for an ashtray. Fortunately, most people don't need such lecturing. Unfortunately, some do.

Rule Enforcement

The degree to which most rules are enforced is inversely proportional to the size of the group. In a party of five or fewer couples, deviations from the norm are obvious. If the crowd is huge, almost any transgression may go unnoticed or unchallenged. At smaller parties, people tend to know each other well, so everyone is aware of expected behavior. Therefore, if you are unsure of your manners, go to the largest party you can find.

SOCIALIZING

The most important etiquette is that involved with person-to-person encounters. Of course, your social sensitivity and local customs might not entirely agree with our observations, but these observations should at least prompt you to be more conscious of your actions and muse upon your motivations.

Meeting and Greeting

Much of what we have said about the mechanics of meeting people through ads or at bars is equally important when you attend a sex party. A few additions and amendments are called for.

Meeting fellow guests at a party is easier than bar contacts. If your host can't handle the logistics of introducing you personally to everyone, at least you can always request the service when you see a particular person who attracts you. In theory, there is also a better compatibility potential throughout the guest list than you would find in more public places.

The major difference between bars or clubs and private parties is the party's superior opportunities for sexual interaction. Privacy and the availability of beds, combined with a much lower likelihood of attendance by tourists, make that voice inside your head far more accurate. Everybody may not be here to get laid, but at least you can be sure that they have an inclination to do something similar.

Such knowledge is not an excuse for dispensing with caution and tact. Just the opposite! The greater the opportunity, the more responsibility required. What, at a bar, was a minor flirtation entailing no obligations and little ego risk, is, at a party, a serious proposal. So don't come on super sexual right from the start. Give yourself and others time to become adjusted. Let interpersonal attractions build naturally.

Participation

Contrary to popular mythology, most groups do not require or expect every attendee to interact physically at every function. Some percentage of the guests will usually not participate sexually on some occasions. If you aren't in the mood do not feel obligated. If the person you desire is not in the mood do not feel offended. Of course, if you are *never* in the mood you have probably chosen the wrong path to social happiness.

External Privacy

Being sincerely interested in other people is flattering, but you should exercise caution concerning place of business and other personal facts. If anyone feels like talking shop, they will broach the topic. Anyway, likes, desires, and opinions are usually more interesting than statistics.

Internal Privacy

Refrain from bothering or interrupting anyone unless absolutely necessary. For instance, if your hosts are intimately entwined when you decide that it is time to depart, do not interrupt to say farewell. Do not even shout goodbye from across the room. Merely leave quietly. Be sure to call your hosts the next day (in the afternoon) and tell them what a good time you had. Doing so, of course, is good etiquette even if you did say goodbye in person.

Nine's a Crowd

It's easy to say that you should never bother people or interrupt their activities, but determining the desirability of your attentions is another matter altogether. Even a pile of flesh can have some code of behavior. When you see a group of people busily sucking and fucking, how do you know whether or not to attach yourself to some desirable loose end? After experiencing this dilemma from all angles we have come to this firm conclusion: It all depends.

It depends on where the group is groping — in a bedroom with the door partially shut or in the middle of the rec room. It depends on how many are participating — a group of four is likely private; twelve or so is a pretty open invitation. It depends on what signals are being broadcast — are they making eye contact with, or comments to those around, or are they pretending to be by themselves? It depends upon how smooth you are. And it certainly depends upon how easily your feelings can be hurt. When in doubt, it's probably best to stay out.

When you choose to throw caution to the winds and join the team without being drafted — and there will be such times — at least be quick to retreat should the object of your attentions show any indication of irritation at your ministrations.

Incapacitation

A woman who is menstruating should inform any advancing male (or female) of her condition in a way that gives them the option of backing out gracefully if they care to do so.

If your partner is incapacitated due to a headache, inebriation, menstruation, etc., you should be cautious

that any resulting gender imbalance does not restrict the activities of other guests.

Coercion

Never under any circumstances force or push anyone to do anything. In addition to alienating the person you seek to control (masochists excluded) such practices are very unsettling to others nearby.

Planned Parenting

It is the woman's responsibility to prevent pregnancy. Our apologies to any who take offense at this admittedly one-sided statement, but a sex party is simply not the place to debate responsibility or to risk pregnancy. Many swingers have undergone surgery to eliminate any chance of conception, but many have not. Men are generally justified in assuming that experienced female swingers are not at risk, but we are personally acquainted with one novice woman who believed it when her husband told her that all the men at a party had had vasectomies — and found out the hard way that he lied. So, if you're a male with a first-time female, it's a good idea to inquire about precautions.

Birth-control measures should be as unnoticeable and inoffensive as possible. If you appreciate cunnilingus, be particularly careful of the contraceptive creams and foams that contain a numbing agent, or your partner won't be able to taste his/her drink for hours afterwards.

Condoms

“Other than having a latex fetish, there are only four reasons for wearing condoms, three of them preventative and all of them of dubious acceptability. Using condoms to prevent pregnancy in a party situation is cumbersome, annoying, risky, and ridiculous. Wearing one to keep from catching a disease is very insulting and practically useless. Using one to prevent the spread of an infection you already have is absolutely taboo, since you should not be there in the first place. A man who wishes to desensitize his penis has other options than turning it into a plastic-coated dildo without thought of his partner's feelings. So if it isn't raining, leave your rubbers at home.”

We wrote the above paragraph in 1976, back when temporary discomfort and perhaps a shot or two were the only known risks of sexual interactions. Today, the scene

has changed ... but not as drastically as you might assume. Some swingers (maybe 10 to 20 percent) now insist on condoms for vaginal or anal intercourse. (We have never witnessed one being used for fellatio.) Some couples (another 10 to 20 percent) have restricted their sexual play with others almost exclusively to manual and oral stimulation, reserving penile penetration for each other (during the party or after going home). The majority seem to look upon the threat of a deadly virus as simply another risk they are willing to take — like driving on dangerous highways to get to the party — and refrain from using condoms.

To mitigate that risk, most swingers have become more cautious in their selection of playmates, especially avoiding those who have no permanent partner. (The idea being that, while one person might be sufficiently deranged to participate in party sex while knowingly infected, it is extremely unlikely that his or her spouse would participate in such a reprehensible act.)

See the discussion of STDs in Chapter 6.

Running the Show

Some people appreciate having a social director tell them what to do; the majority do not. Manipulating people to realize your personal fantasies is rude and dehumanizing. If doing your own thing involves the cooperation of others, ask nicely. Don't instruct, and don't be upset if they ignore your pleas.

All in the Family

Having sex with the person who came to the party with you, whether spouse or blind date, is perfectly acceptable. In fact, such togetherness is a common practice for novices getting accustomed to swinging. However, if both of you are experienced participants and neither of you has any contact with other guests, you are probably risking a few comments, if not censure. Although many swingers enjoy an appreciative observer now and then, they generally don't care to be stared at like peculiar animals in a zoo. If all you ever do is watch, a reevaluation of your social style is definitely in order.

Gossip

Try not to talk very much about anyone not present. Gossip about others is an admission that you and the people you are with are not very interesting.

When you are discussing an experience that displeased you, do not speak of those involved in a deprecating manner. If the group dynamics were poor, merely refer to it as a bad scene. Look hard enough for personal faults and you're bound to find them — on both sides. We guarantee that open criticism of those not present will cause your listeners to wonder what you say about *them* when *they* aren't around.

The Proposition

No matter how creative you may be, there are a limited number of ways to say, "Do you wanna fuck?" While such a direct approach may often be the best, each person, male or female, must develop an approach that he finds both comfortable and reasonably effective.

Always avoid the impersonal. In demonstration of the impersonal approach we present a short skit that may seem unlikely and outlandish, nevertheless it is a verbatim account of an actual event.

THE ROAD TO INFAMY (A Tragedy in One Act)

SCENE: The living room of a small country home. A dozen or so well-dressed people sitting and standing around.

CHARACTERS: Three women who have just recently met each other, and one man who has met none of the three.

ACTION: MAN *approaches couch where three women are seated side by side, kneels in front of first woman and puts his hand on her knee.*

MAN: "Let's you and me go in the bedroom and get better acquainted."

FIRST WOMAN: "No thanks. Not right now."

MAN: "What's the matter, are you shy?"

FIRST WOMAN (chuckling): "Yeah, I'm shy."

MAN (looking over at SECOND WOMAN, with hand still on knee of FIRST WOMAN): "Well, how about you?"

SECOND WOMAN: "No, I don't think so."

MAN: "What's a matter, are you shy too?"

SECOND WOMAN: "I guess I am."

MAN (looking at THIRD WOMAN): "And I suppose you're shy too?"

THIRD WOMAN (suppressing nervous giggle): "Me, I'm shyer than both of them!"

The man stands up muttering and walks away. The women stare at each other and shake their heads in amazement.

THE (very sad) END

Happily, very few people have the audacity to be so blunt when first speaking to a stranger. Compounding the blunder by displaying a complete lack of discrimination as well as discretion is justification for excommunication, if not castration.

If you just want an orgasm, go out to the garage and jerk-off (please don't clog up the bathroom). Using a direct approach means avoiding euphemisms, not humanism.

Saying No

Upon hearing of our endeavor to write this book, a remarkable number of our friends requested that we include a section on "How to say no." The wide popularity of this subject is, in itself, a beautiful counter to the claim that open sexuality is only enacted between depersonalized satyrs and nymphos. Most swingers are troubled by the thought of damaging anyone's ego while exercising their own natural selectivity.

When someone asks you to "get better acquainted," pause for a moment and ask yourself what you really want to do. If your answer is yes, say so. If your answer is maybe, say yes anyway. (Few things are more sexually stimulating than having sex.)

If your answer is no, don't say yes, and don't say maybe either. Also, don't mislead your suitor or waste his/her time by changing the subject. Presumably you wouldn't ask anyone to fuck if fucking was not what you really wanted to do at the moment. Recognize that others are the same and give them a reasonable chance to extricate themselves from you and find a suitable replacement.

If you are unsure of how direct your negative reply should be, try this formula: Respond in the same manner as you were asked. For example, if someone openly asks

"Would you like to fuck," you may feel free simply to say "No," or "Not now," (if you seriously think that you might later). On the other hand, if someone makes a rather oblique reference to "seeing the rest of the house," you may be equally roundabout in your reply.

Likewise, don't *make* a proposition in a direct and obvious manner if you aren't capable of gracefully accepting a direct and obvious decline.

Choices

Don't feel that the presence of numerous possible partners puts any pressure on you to interact with more than one, or with someone "new." Remember that the advantage of the larger party is the greater selectivity it allows. The more people in attendance, the more certain you can be that the partner you choose is the very one you truly desire, even if he or she is the most familiar. Too often the "kid-in-the-candy-store" sensation pressures people to gobble up as many new treats as possible just because they aren't available very often.

Any attempt to choose sex partners based on newness or rare availability alone will separate the mental processes from the natural emotional and physiological attractions and, as likely as not, result in vague dissatisfactions with the entire event. So don't decide to interact with someone just because they are new or available. Choose the person you really want to be with, even if you have already been with that person several times before, and even if you won't ever see the others again. Variety is great, but it is more important to stay in touch with your true desires and act accordingly.

Chapter 6

COPING

Swinging gatherings are superior parties (in our opinion) but they are rarely perfect parties for everyone involved. From time to time you are likely to find yourself in a bothersome, difficult, or unpleasant situation. Elsewhere, we discuss improving yourself to ensure that your emotions, expectations, or actions do not hinder your enjoyment. Here, we would like to say a few words about handling problems caused outside yourself by undesirable pests, whether human, bacterial, viral, or parasitic.

HUMAN HASSLES

The most likely encountered difficulties are caused by fellow participants acting in ways you find undesirable.

The Obnoxious Guest

People known to violate accepted codes of behavior in a blatant manner are rarely invited to a party by an experienced host. But not all party-givers are veterans, and people can get uncharacteristically drunk, and their characters have been known to change rapidly, and guests are unlikely to publicly announce any newly developed personality problems; and sometimes a party is simply crashed by uninvited acquaintances who happen to find out where the action is. Thus, removing guests from the premises might be necessary at times.

Primary responsibility for the eviction process falls on the shoulders of the person who is hosting the get-together. Due to inexperience, shyness, lack of self-confidence, fear, inattention, or lack of feedback from the guests, however, the hosts may not act when they should.

By way of illustration, imagine that Mary Jane gets plowed out of her mind and proves to be a nasty drunk. She has spilled drinks on several people and several carpets. She lays a burning cigarette on the wooden coffee table and walks off leaving it there. She walks into an occupied bedroom and makes snide remarks about the large appetites and small equipment she sees. Et cetera. You perceive this situation and notice that others are also painfully aware, yet no one seems inclined to do anything about it. As a guest, and as someone who is aware enough and concerned enough to have read this book,

you have an obligation to the party and to yourself to assist your hosts in carrying out their duties. That is, since you are able to respond (“response-able”), you ought to do so.

Do not, however, allow this sense of response-ability to make you eschew proper channels. You are overstepping your bounds should you attempt to deal with Mary Jane directly. Of course, you may personally try to assist her or sober her up, but showing her the door is the job of the door's owner.

What you ought to do is privately tell the host(s) that you feel that Mary Jane is going to destroy the party unless they take immediate action. By doing so you will be supplying your host with four helpful things: (1) Directing his attention to the problem. (2) Giving him additional stimuli to do something about it. (3) Letting him know that other guests are not averse to what he should do. (4) And giving him strength to face Mary Jane herself. If your host is new to the game, you might point out that his first course of action should be to discuss the matter with Mary Jane's spouse or date. All interactions should take place as privately as possible with no more implied force than necessary.

Should your host be unwilling to act, you might try quietly urging another guest (preferably of the opposite sex, but not your date) to make the same suggestions. If neither of you can sway your host, your only options are to try to forget it or to leave.

The Persistent Admirer

Few social activities have felt the impact of the recent emphasis on gender equality more than has swinging. As a result, many men find themselves in the disconcertingly uncomfortable position of having to defend themselves against forward females. Women obnoxiously chasing men is certainly no improvement on the more traditional pattern of men obnoxiously chasing women. Nevertheless, some good may come of it if men, finding the shoe quite uncomfortable on the other foot, realize that both feet are the same size.

Anyway, no matter your gender, chances are that someone whose attentions you do not savor will occasionally hound you. In the last chapter we considered the how and when of declining a proposition, but that advice won't always work. Sometimes they never distinctly put the proposition in a way that allows for a negative answer, sometimes a person's general manner of acting and

speaking will seem to stake a claim on you for the evening, and sometimes they will ignore a direct “no.”

We would be happy to share our magic incantation for repelling unwanted overtures, if we had one. Unfortunately, we have only these few suggestions.

Do not run. Backing away is rarely effective unless you don't mind hiding in a closet all night. Leaving the party could ruin your night and probably the night of whomever becomes the new focus of attention.

Do not give in. If you acquiesce, you risk having his devotion for years, not to mention giving up your pride.

Do not harangue the offender. A loud, long, public lecture about how obnoxious he is, might really destroy him and will not endear you to the hearts of the other guests.

Overall, your best shot is probably to get the person aside and tell him that you are complimented by his attentions but that you cannot return the interest and would very much appreciate his pursuing someone else.

Should he insist on more of an explanation, realize that he has absolutely no right to do so. Such boorishness frees you of any requirement for honesty and allows you to fabricate any tale that you think might work. You could say, for example, that he looks just like someone whom you had a very bad experience with, or that you are allergic to his body odor, or that his aura gives you cramps.

Salvaging

Even sex parties can be duds. It's possible for everyone to be in the mood to enjoy a party and no one to be in the mood to get it going.

In Chapter 11, we thoroughly consider the challenge of getting things started. Those comments are directed toward the hosts who, after all, have the primary responsibility for the party. We must assume, however, that you will sometimes attend parties hosted by some poor unfortunate who has not read this book, and that a few of these parties will not manage to get off the ground unassisted. By all means, don't be afraid to assert yourself and do a little creative instigating.

One situation we don't mention in Chapter 11 is the party that doesn't work because the wrong mix of people were invited (or showed up). If the party is small, there may not be any compatible people present. More likely, a few will find each other attractive, but be hesitant to start

anything in the presence of guests they find unattractive. This sort of mix can result in half the party sitting around on their hands waiting for the other half to go home. Since you can assume that your host is one of those in waiting, you ought to get his private okay before taking any steps toward involving people with each other. Fortunately this situation happens infrequently, but it is a good idea to work through your host anyway.

Bailing Out

When you are having a lousy time despite your best efforts, it is probably best to leave. Unless you are at a large party, where folks are constantly arriving and departing, it is in poor taste to leave early. So if you must go, go quietly. Your host will appreciate your unobtrusive fading away, and the other guests won't remember you as “that loud couple who stomped out right in the middle of the party.” All this strengthens the advisability of keeping your clothing, shoes, and coats together and accessible.

It is, of course, doubly offensive to talk another couple into leaving with you. And, if you should depart with a crowd of guests in tow, be prepared for a hostile response, for thou hast mightily transgressed. Far better to go home, accept that everything can't be perfect and have the party yourself next month than to try to salvage an impossibly dull or bothersome evening by causing confusion among the guests and consternation in the hosts.

DISEASE

Those who misconstrue the existence of "evil" in the world have always claimed a connection between their personal problems and acts committed or omitted by their neighbors. You might think that we've come a long way since tribal chieftains blamed poor harvests on the irreligious attitude of the latest human sacrifice, but many people are still quick to cite “immoral” actions as the cause of man's trials and tribulations.

Some people, particularly those associated with fundamentalist religions, consider sexually transmitted disease (STD)¹⁰ to be God's punishment for promiscuity. By that “reasoning” process, is the common cold Divine punishment for shaking hands? Do people get ptomaine poisoning because God thinks that eating is immoral?

¹⁰This used to be called “venereal” disease, from the same Latin root as “Venus,” indicating a relationship with physical love.

All those who enjoy party sex must face the fact that such parties are subject to viral, bacterial, and fungal invasions. But, they should also resist the cultural pressure to feel shame when they are victims of those attacks.

The Problem

Dozens of contagious physical problems are associated with sexual interactions. Since the founding of modern medicine, syphilis, gonorrhea, and crab lice have been the most recognized. Then, in the 1970's, a tiny critter named herpes simplex virus type-2 was discovered, followed a decade later by its nightmarish relative, the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV).

Unfortunately, gonorrhea, lice, and herpes do pop up now and again among sex partyers. Syphilis is almost unheard of. Fortunately, as of this writing, no cases of AIDS have surfaced within the swinging community. (To be more specific: As of this writing, among the thousands of couples we have met, talked with, or heard or read about, no one has developed symptoms of, or knows of being exposed to, the HIV.) There are, of course, no guarantees that the picture won't darken tomorrow. If and when it does, many swingers will, no doubt, modify their behavior. (See the discussion on "Condoms" in chapter 5.)

A little-understood danger of the "minor" STDs is that their presence can increase the risk of more serious problems. Women, especially, need to be aware of these links. According to the Centers for Disease Control: "the presence of genital ulcers, such as those produced by syphilis and herpes, or the presence of an inflammatory STD, such as chlamydia or gonorrhea, may make HIV transmission easier." Also, "Concern about HPV [human papillomavirus]¹¹ has increased in recent years after several studies showed that HPV infection is associated with the development of cervical cancer." All of which is strong argument for both men and women having regular physical checkups, so simple irritations don't become life-threatening.

The "other" diseases haven't exactly abdicated the planet to AIDS. In fact, the incidence of several serious STDs is increasing in North America. One reason is a

lack of public awareness of how unbelievably tricky these beasties can be.

Symptoms

Almost every common STD can attack the human body and (1) produce no symptoms at all, or (2) produce symptoms only internally and unnoticeably, or (3) produce such slight symptoms that the infected person easily misses them.¹² Such a lack or minimization of symptoms happens with surprising frequency. It is thus not unusual for a person to catch and pass on a disease while remaining blissfully unaware of the process.

Incubation Periods

There is a great difference in the length of time it takes for various diseases to show themselves in various people. A person may show symptoms in as little as three days while his/her partner will not have any unhealthy signs until six months later. This makes it impossible to be sure of the exact infection date by extrapolating from the date of symptom appearance.

Carriers

It is not only possible to pass on a disease without having any noticeable or immediate symptoms yourself, but most disease-causing organisms can be carried for long periods and transmitted without ever attacking the host body at all. In fact, there are men's diseases that are carried by unaffected women, and women's diseases that are carried by unaffected men.

Transmission

Sexual intercourse involves prolonged (we hope) contact between large portions of the skin and membranes that are most likely to be infected with disease-causing organisms, therefore most cases of STDs are passed between people while fucking. But definitely not all. Many a person has been surprised by unexpected complications from a brief touch or a goodnight kiss.

¹¹HPV is a virus that sometimes causes genital warts but in many cases infects people without causing noticeable symptoms.

¹²A good example is herpes, about which the Centers for Disease Prevention and Control says: "Many cases of genital herpes are acquired from people who do not know they are infected or who had no symptoms at the time of the sexual contact."

The Odds

Just as going to the office where a co-worker has symptoms of the flu does not mean that you will also get sick, so having sex with someone who has an STD (with or without symptoms) does not mean that you will also become infected. The human body is not consistently efficient in repelling or succumbing to invaders.¹³

Tracing and Placing

All of the aforementioned factors may occur in various combinations to make it highly difficult — actually impossible — to trace accurately the source of any disease you happen to catch.

To illustrate, let us consider the case of the fictitious Andrew Accuse, who is surprised one morning to feel an unusual burning sensation while urinating. Upon closely inspecting his penis, Andy discovers a slight yellowish discharge. Immediately he calls to his darling spouse. "Shit, honey, I got the clap!"

"Oh my god," she shrieks, running to his side. "I knew you should've stayed away from that blonde. Those unmarried girls never care about *whom* they do it with. You'd better call the health department about her!"

But Andrew Accuse isn't about to let his selectivity be so easily impugned. "How do I know I didn't get it from you? I heard that some women can't tell when they've got it. Weren't you messin' around with Willie Wilde last Saturday night?"

Thus chastened, Mrs. Accuse accompanies her husband to the luxurious office of Dr. Discreet, who, while not their regular doctor, has a reputation for forgetting to report STD cases to the authorities. The verdict: Mr. Accuse, positive; Mrs. Accuse, negative.

Once more Mrs. Accuse launches an attack on Sally Single (otherwise known as "that blonde"). "I told you to call the health department about her!" So Andrew does.

The problems with the attitudes and beliefs expressed by our mythical, but all-too-unexceptional, couple should be obvious to the enlightened reader, but we will list them anyway. (1) The Accuses really cannot be sure that the disease was contracted on the night that Andy met Sally — incubation periods vary. (2) Mrs. Accuse may

indeed have transmitted the disease to her husband — unaffected carriers. (3) Either of them might have picked up the gonococcus organism from other contacts with other people — gonorrhea can be transmitted by any mucous membrane contact. (4) Even if Sally Single does prove to have the disease, there is no proof that she gave it to Andrew — men, on the average, have only a 35-percent chance of catching gonorrhea during one exposure.

Even so, the attitude of Mr. and Mrs. Accuse is not the most important difficulty. What is paramount is the effect that their beliefs had upon their actions. Of course, they were correct in seeking medical treatment, although they probably needn't have feared going to their own doctor or to a public health clinic. They should not, however, have reported Sally Single to anyone. She should have been personally contacted and warned that she *might* have gonorrhea. A strenuous suggestion that she should see a doctor would also be in order. In addition, the Accuses should have called anyone else with whom they had intimate contact in the past several weeks.

If you should discover that some sexually transmitted virus, bug, or bacterium has taken up residence in your body, this is what you should do. First, call each person with whom you have recently had direct sexual contact. Tell them as much or as little as you like, but tell them to see a doctor immediately. It is a good idea to explain that the absence of symptoms is no insurance. (After all, whoever transmitted the disease to you probably wasn't aware of the infection.)

Second, if you have recently attended any parties, call the hosts and inform them of the danger. Suggest that they ought to call the other guests. Remember, no one has reason to be embarrassed or reticent. An STD isn't anybody's fault, any more than the chickenpox is anybody's fault. But if you don't call, you are contributing to its spread and greatly increasing the likelihood of catching it again yourself ... which would serve you right for being so imprudent.

Should you be the host, and someone calls to inform you that unwanted microscopic visitors might have crashed your party, consider yourself fortunate. The unlucky people are the ones who are *not* told. Be sure to call everyone who was at your party and tell them that they may have been exposed to a communicable disease. Again, explain the symptoms, but *do not* say who called you. Informing on your informers is not only unfair

¹³Researchers currently say, for example, that the odds of picking up HIV from having unprotected sex with an infected person are smaller than 1 in 800.

considering the social stigma attached to anyone who becomes infected, but it is also dangerous to all, as it increases the likelihood of further non-detection. If John and Mary were not in direct contact with the person who first developed symptoms, and they have no symptoms themselves, they may take the easy way out and do nothing. This, of course, is very risky, and the next time you are with John and Mary (or with someone who has been with John and Mary, etc.) *you* may be the unwitting victim. So tell everyone to get checked right away, but — for your own safety — don't be specific about other people involved. You are not being evasive; you are being careful. And care is of the greatest importance.

For the same reasons, if you are called by anyone and notified that you may have been exposed to a communicable disease while attending a party, do not ask questions. Merely thank the caller for his concern, assure him that you will see a doctor, and do so immediately.

Singles and STDs

The attitude toward unmarried (or rather, uncoupled) participants expressed by Mrs. Accuse is not at all unusual. Swingers are often wary of single adults. While much of the anti-single bias is rooted in fear of losing a partner to someone who is “on the make” or looking to get married, the excuse heard most often concerns an increased risk of disease.

We would like to be able to say that this is a lot of bunk, but the point has some validity. It is not that singles get around more; married people who frequent sex parties have equal or greater contact with unfamiliar bodies. It is not that they are less selective: a marriage license has no effect upon a person's taste in friends. Nor is it that they do not care — nobody wants to be sick, married or not. It *is* that singles have less opportunity of detecting the problem. Without fairly constant interaction with one other person, a lack of symptoms is bound to mean that an infection will go unnoticed longer. Thus, sexual contact with a person should be safer if that person has a stable sexual relationship with a specific partner. Exactly how much safer, we don't pretend to know.

Precautions

Should you and your spouse manage to remain monogamous for your entire lives, you have a good chance of remaining untouched by STDs. Yet even then you are not one-hundred-percent safe.

Not being licensed physicians, we will refrain from mentioning any of the purported preventatives. We do recommend the following precautions:

- Limit your interactions to couples who have a steady and caring relationship.
- Be observant, but not anxious.
- Follow your intuition: if a situation makes you uneasy, even though you can't pinpoint the reason, leave.
- If you believe you should utilize a condom, don't let anyone talk you out of it. Should your partner want to utilize a condom, cooperate willingly. Many men unaccustomed to condoms experience difficulty maintaining their erection when putting them on. Possible remedies are: (1) practice with your primary partner, and (2) make use of modern medications.
- Undergo a thorough medical examination at least once, preferably twice, a year.

Chapter 7

PHYSICAL MATTERS

"It would be strange indeed if no relationship existed between the beautiful and the healthy."

— Alexander Lowen

Pleasure

Of all the activities humans have yet devised, few encourage an awareness of the physical form to the extent that swinging does. This awareness usually leads to an above average and beneficial concern with the operation, optimization, decoration, and maintenance of the body. A dirty, out-of-shape, disheveled, or diseased person will find as much happiness at a sex party as a penguin is likely to discover on a tour of Death Valley.

BEAUTY IS IN ...

Many people who have never known the joys of swinging are laboring under the misconception that being a happy swinger requires the looks of a model in a lingerie ad. Not true. You don't have to have classic facial features, perky breasts, long legs, bulging biceps, or blinding white bicuspid teeth to be the hit of the party ... but it is a good idea to be beautiful.

Yes, dear readers, we do believe that beauty is extremely important in human relations, especially sexual relations. But, before half of you write us off as materialistic clods with the personal sensitivity of jackrabbits, we ought to point out that true beauty has more to do with function than with form. Consider the diverse situations in which the term "beauty" is employed:

- ☺ The photographer struck by a sunset: "What a beautiful day!"
- ☺ The lover, upon his girl's first disrobing: "My God, you're beautiful!"
- ☺ The horse-lover looking at a prize filly: "She's absolutely beautiful!"
- ☺ The technician describing a space launch: "It's a beauty!"

While each of these situations has obvious dissimilarities in the entity being described, there is no basic difference in the meaning given to the word "beautiful." In every example, and in most cases where the term is used, you would lose some of the poetry but none of the

meaning if you substituted the phrase "what it is supposed to be" for "beautiful."

The technician means that the rocket is performing as planned; the lover remarks that her body meets his every expectation; the equestrian thinks the animal exhibits every proper characteristic of a horse.

Unquestionably, the media, fashion designers, and cosmetic producers would like us to believe that some particular color on the cheek or curve of the nose is more admirable than others; but that's their hang-up, it needn't be ours.

The beautiful person is one who is healthy, who is in love with and excited about living, and who feels good about him/herself. Such a person will naturally impress and excite those around him/her.

Becoming a beautiful person requires two things: one, getting your body in optimum physical condition, and two, developing a mental picture of yourself as an exciting, healthy human being. In rare cases, it may also require plastic surgery. If so, go ahead and do it. Accidents that occur before birth are no more natural or "good" than accidents that occur after birth. For example, if you were badly burned at the age of twelve we doubt that you would feel unnatural about having a skin graft to restore your "normal" looks. Why should you feel differently about correcting a distorted eyelid you received by an equally accidental mixing of genes at your conception? God gave the world plastic surgeons. Use this gift wisely.

In our experience, the most important attributes of beauty are the mouth, the eyes, and the waistline.

The Mouth

The shape of the mouth is of little consequence so long as it allows for efficient eating, talking, and caressing. What is important is whether the mouth in question is smiling or not.

The smile is so important to social relations that some lecturers, authors, and institutes feel justified in spending most of their time trying to teach people to smile more often. Unfortunately most of us were raised by adults who constantly harped on us to stand up straight, say "please," and smile. This association with parental palaver often causes us to ignore sound advice. Everybody knows they should smile more often, just as everybody knows they should eat well-balanced meals.

Beautiful people smile because: (1) They want to make other people feel good, and smiling makes other people feel good. (2) They realize that being positive is better than being negative, and smiling is positive. (3) They know that smiling is an act that fights depression and other undesired emotions. In other words, a smile is both a cause and an effect of being beautiful.

As with anything, smiling can be overdone. Carrying a constant "shit-eating-grin" on your face will make others feel uneasy and could propel you into a padded cell. We all experience unhappy periods when smiling is inappropriate, but when you're happy, let people know it. When you're just so-so, concentrate on smiling anyway; it may make you happy.

The Eyes

Ask any portrait photographer or painter what the most important element of a picture is. Nine out of ten will tell you "the eyes." If the eyes aren't right, the portrait will be a disaster. If the eyes are good, the portrait can be acceptable despite obvious flaws elsewhere.

In person-to-person interactions the eyes are just as important. We need hardly mention the thousands of references to the impact of eyes throughout literature. Eyes seem to communicate our emotions and desires more accurately than words.

Research indicates that the pupil noticeably contracts when viewing an enemy and dilates when gazing upon a loved one. Such automatic movements are beyond the control of most of us, but we can control where and when we cast our glance. Looking into another person's eyes directly without causing discomfort is a trait common to beautiful people.

When you are talking with someone, show how interested, better yet, how fascinated, you are by giving them your full attention. The eyes are your most important way of taking in information. If you're not looking at your partner much of the time, you are indicating that he or she isn't worth your attention.

This might require some practice, but a conscious attempt now will lead to the future ability to look without defenses into the eyes of another. Such a look, combined with a smile, is so beautiful that it can be resisted by only the hardest men and women.

The Waistline

Personal taste varies greatly regarding how thick or thin a body should be. All we know is that the extremes of either are not beautiful, because they are not healthy.

We can almost hear the outraged cries of a few of our readers, "But so-and-so *likes* me this way!" Well . . . maybe so, but if so-and-so really cared about *you*, he/she would want you to be healthy.

The problem of being overweight is, of course, much easier to comment upon than to do something about. If society encouraged people to partake of the joys of sex parties instead of the joys of dinner parties our national health would improve markedly. Unfortunately the manufacturers of antacids seem to have greater political clout than the producers of massage oils, so such a change of attitude is not likely to occur anytime soon.

For those of you who sincerely want to lose a significant amount of weight, we can only emphasize the necessity of changing your whole mental and emotional attitude toward food while you follow a sensible, medically approved diet designed to revise your eating habits permanently.

And for those who are comfortable being overweight and still find happiness in swinging, we say "great." But we also caution you not to make the mistake of denigrating thinner folks by using pejorative terms like "Barbie and Ken." To do so smacks of sour grapes.

Attractiveness

All of this discussion of true beauty is not meant to ignore or deny the influence of the media upon the average citizen's judgment of attractiveness. We all know that someone who is extremely attractive in the Hollywood or television tradition will likely be readily accepted and sought after even if he/she never smiles or looks one in the eyes. Nevertheless, such fashionable features are not necessary. Being beautiful is quite sufficient.

FRIENDLY MAINTENANCE

People attending a sex party are more likely to be too clean than not clean enough. Nevertheless, with the faint hope that someone who doesn't pay enough attention to his own body might just be paying attention to our words, we feel duty bound to say the following.

Less than one percent of those people we have encountered in swinging situations have been so lax about their bathing habits as to exude a noticeably unpleasant odor. Perhaps those who do so actually prefer themselves this way, more likely they are simply unaware. Since any change in your body odor is likely to occur slowly, you probably will not even notice anything wrong until long after everyone else notices. The only sure and simple solution, therefore, is to wash thoroughly prior to any expected physical encounter.

Other than such general words of caution, we have only three short and specific notes on the need for cleanliness.

First, be especially aware of your ears. Few people find the taste of earwax exciting. Also, refrain from putting cologne behind your ears, or any other place where a tongue is likely to wander. It may smell great, but it will taste horrible.

Second, pay thorough attention to cleaning your anus. Even if neither you nor your partner appreciates analingus, remember that the nose often approaches places that the tongue doesn't go.

Third, the uncircumcised male must clean carefully and often beneath his foreskin.

UNDRESS FOR SUCCESS

The most important thing about what you wear to a swinging function is that it reflects your own taste while being suitable for the occasion. Spending gobs of cash on clothing won't guarantee popularity; however, no amount of satisfaction gained from being economical will make you feel good wearing clothes you don't like. Let your emotions have as much say as possible about how your body is adorned.

Several specific guidelines are particularly applicable to dressing for the typical sex party.

Your clothing should be easy to remove quickly without awkward positions or contortions. Be sure your zippers don't snag and your fasteners don't include safety pins.

Realize that you might have cause to abandon all sense of orderliness and wantonly pitch your clothes into a corner. Even if you have the foresight to fold each item carefully and lay it aside, chances are that somebody will

come along and move it or sit on it, if not lie on it. Plan for the worst and don't wear anything that wrinkles easily.

Likewise, be prepared for the possibility of spilled drinks, dust from beneath the bed, ashes from the fireplace, dirt from someone's mis-thrown shoe, and stains from various lotions and bodily fluids. If you can't tolerate cleaning bills, stick to wash-n-wear.

Remember that you're going to have to put your clothes back on sometime, possibly when you've had a bit to drink, possibly in the dark, usually when you're tired. Being careful to put all your clothes together in one place is a good idea. Wearing the fewest possible items in the first place is also a good idea.

Need we remind you that the first to go on are the last to come off? Your underwear should reflect your taste just as much as your outer garments; that is, if you wear any at all. Although much money is spent each year on fancy panties and briefs, they are seldom noticed. Once one gets to the point of removing their outer garments, the undies tend to follow quite rapidly. It's simpler not to wear the things at all. So far, we've never heard anyone complain that their new friend wasn't wearing underpants.

PERFORMANCE AND ENJOYMENT

Difficulty in performing or enjoying sexual relations unquestionably will detract from your fun at a sex party. Everyone experiences such difficulties from time to time — if you haven't directly yourself, one of your partners probably has. This may help.

When Once Is Too Much

The inability to attain an erection is, of course, a male problem. Yet females obviously suffer inconvenience and sometimes feelings of inferiority, not to mention horniness, when their male partner is physically unresponsive.

Men who suffer from primary (constant) impotency are rarely attracted to swinging, although some like to practice their expertise with fingers and tongue while their wives or girlfriends enjoy the fucking that they cannot provide courtesy of other party attendees. Or, they and their partners may limit themselves to "soft" activities. (And no, "soft swinging" does not mean "swinging without an erection.")

Sometimes unexpected failure is due to excessive consumption of alcohol, anxiety over other problems, or just plain fatigue. In our observation, and we believe that scientific opinion generally supports us, temporary impotency is usually caused simply by trying too hard. The attempt to command one's penis to become hard is almost certain to be counterproductive. When a man consciously dwells upon obtaining an erection, he is thinking about three things: (1) his flaccid penis, (2) a challenge to perform, and thus (3) the imagined results of failure. Not one of these three things is sexually arousing to the average male.

It is, without doubt, a lot easier to say "don't worry about a thing" than it is actually to take your mind from the subject at a crucial moment. Sometimes an extensive and expensive professional treatment is called for, but often a man can overcome temporary impotency by following these guidelines:

- Don't attempt sex unless you really feel sexy — not exhausted, not drunk, not worried over problems at work.
- Don't have sex with anyone who doesn't appeal to you in some substantial manner and whom you do not respect as a human being.
- Have patience. If you're with someone you like and are in good physical condition you *will* get an erection eventually. Don't try to mess with the natural timing of things by attempting insertion too soon.
- Discover, and then pursue, what is really sexy to *you*. No one will think you weird if you find that black lace garter belts and strawberry douches aren't nearly as sexy to you as a tender smile and warm loving eyes (or vice versa).
- If you feel any difficulty in getting or maintaining an erection concentrate on how much you like your partner and on how good her body looks and feels. Lose yourself in your senses and your body very likely will take care of itself.
- Don't be reticent about using fantasy as a stimulus. If you would really rather be lodged snugly in your partner's rectum or left ear (or whatever) she won't complain if you close your eyes and pretend.

Should failure to attain a satisfactory erection occur more and more frequently — especially when you are sober and alert — don't hesitate to seek medical assistance. Chances are excellent that you merely suffer from

some constriction in the tiny blood vessels that create erections; a condition easily corrected by modern medication.

For those of you who have been experiencing some difficulties but haven't yet sought medical attention, consider this: If you woke up tomorrow morning and discovered that you couldn't move your thumbs, how long would you wait to see a doctor? Would you have reason to be embarrassed? So why is this so different?

Responding to No Response

As we stated earlier, impotency is a two-person problem. So, here's a list of suggestions for the female who finds herself with a willing but unable partner:

- Don't pretend not to notice that everything isn't as it should be. You won't be kidding anyone and you will be inserting an element of falseness into the interaction.
- While recognizing the situation, don't openly refer to it as a tragedy or problem.
- Don't act as if it's the first time it ever happened, even in the unlikely event that it is.
- Concentrate on showing tenderness¹⁴ and on convincing your partner that you enjoy being in intimate contact with him without penetration, and that you'd like to stay and hold him for a while longer anyway.

In other words, take the pressure off and continue to act lovingly and sensual. Often as not, you'll soon find yourself with a very rigid bed mate.

Over Too Soon?

Sexologists and other concerned scientists have not yet managed to formulate a definition of premature ejaculation that is satisfactory, either to their community or to anyone else. Some have attempted to decree an arbitrary time limit — if you can hold it off for a minute and a half you are okay — which may be acceptable to some women but absolutely laughable to others. Even Masters and Johnson admit that their working definition (being able to satisfy your partner at least 50 percent of the time is considered acceptable) makes no sense if your partner is frigid.

Rather than try to define or redefine premature ejaculation we prefer to use a term that is more descriptive of the problem: "uncontrolled ejaculation." If the

¹⁴Unless, of course, it's an S/M scene.

male climaxes sooner than (or later than) he wants to, then his ejaculation is uncontrolled.

For those who are inconvenienced by an inability to control the moment of climax satisfactorily, many techniques for better physical control abound in popular writings and old-husbands' tales (counting backwards from 69 septillion, thinking about kitty litter, etc.).

A possible alternative is flexing every muscle in your body as tightly as you can whenever you feel on the brink. This will take some practice, but you can learn it without anyone else noticing. The technique you choose should be the one that works best for you, not necessarily the one that the latest best-selling author recommends.

Again, you should consult the medical community for solutions to persistent problems.

You ought to consider if you are trying to over control, and perhaps be a little less concerned about the whole idea. This may sound like heresy, but we feel that some people concentrate so much on lasting forever that they forget to enjoy themselves.

Enjoy, Enjoy

Both men and women can easily become over controlled and under satisfied. They attend more and more parties and become more and more conditioned to satisfying more and more people until their own satisfaction begins to fall off and one night the whole scene just seems like too much work. Overexposure is a partial cause, but letting your ego overrule your glands is a quick route to the blahs.

Everybody should be at a party for their own pleasure. If Joe spends his time trying to satisfy Mary, and Mary worries all night about turning Mike on, and Mike strains himself stimulating Brenda, and Brenda ... , a tremendous amount of effort will be wasted and no one will really be satisfied.

We are definitely not suggesting that everyone sit in a corner and play with themselves. Consideration for others is important in any social situation, and is liable to bring pleasure to both parties. Nevertheless, when a man brags about how often he made so many women climax, or when a woman judges her night by the number of men she managed to re-erect, we suspect that the luster is about to wear off.

The Final Act

Orgasms can be glorious, and we wouldn't want to be guilty of trying to diminish their importance or their sensation. But they aren't always as critical to fulfillment as we might think.

Sexual activity can be usefully compared to a musical symphony. Just as each note of music is played to be heard and appreciated for itself and its relation to other notes around it, so each act of touching, seeing, and hearing during sex can be enjoyed on its own merits, yet influenced by its preceding and succeeding sensations. The closing crescendo of a symphony should be played as a fitting end to a pleasurable arrangement. Yet the final note is not the *purpose* of the music. Without it, some enjoyment will be lost, but the pleasure gained from the other parts can still be satisfying.

Climaxing can be a fantastic experience, but it is not the *purpose* of sex any more than any other act is the purpose. So climax when you feel like it, and if you don't, well that can be good too.

What happens if you do feel like climaxing but you can't? Although generally a female problem, males may suffer likewise and some of our discussion can be applied to both sexes.

A woman who usually climaxes with her partner at home may have difficulty at a party for various reasons. She may be distracted by activity around her, or uncomfortable in a strange situation. Most likely, the lack of practice together results in her new partner not doing things quite the way she prefers. Fortunately a party offers many different ways to make up for such shortcomings, but you have to be willing to use them.

The key lies in not being afraid to try various approaches. Several men in rapid succession, or simultaneously, might be just what is needed. Vibrators are usually acceptable accessories during any stage of the action, as are dildoes. Your own fingers are probably the most experienced at making you cum, and if you are shy, try a position where it's not so obvious.

Keep the communication lines open. Tell your partner what you like, and what's uncomfortable. When you do climax be sure and let your partner know. It is not always easy to tell, particularly with someone new. There are women who scream their heads off for thirty minutes and never quite cum; others don't even murmur while

climaxing several times. So, don't expect your partner to know. Being clinical isn't necessary. Instead of saying "I just climaxed." try a more friendly, "You really made me cum great!" or "Thanks, I needed I good cum!" People who are concerned about satisfying their partners deserve positive feedback without having to ask for it.

The Performance Trap

If your ability to perform in any manner causes problems for you then you are more than justified in striving to better your performance. Nevertheless, be cautious in rating yourself.

You might be a fantastic lover, but you're not perfect. No one is, or can be. You're probably sometimes fair and sometimes very good. Try to be more considerate, but forget setting records. Maybe you're terrible. Even so, don't get suicidal. Being terrible isn't so terrible. Lots of people enjoy games and sports they aren't proficient at. Besides, your capabilities *can* be altered. Seek competent assistance and keep practicing and practicing and practicing

Chapter 8

A SWINGING ATTITUDE

We shall never be able to experience sex as play until we stop taking it so seriously.

— Frederick Kirschenmann

“Sex as Play,” *The Christian Century*, July 31, 1968, p. 967.

Several chapters of this book are concerned with the process of partying, offering advice on etiquette during the swing of things. We should also consider what goes into your decision to attend a party, and your general state of mind while you are there, both of which are far more crucial to your ultimate pleasure than remembering your social graces. Being able to act cool won't contribute much to your good times if you harbor unrealistic expectations, if you hang on to prejudices, or if your mind is not open to playfulness.

Some of the following discussion is directed to the person just now considering getting involved in swinging; much of it is applicable to the veteran as well.

EXPECTATIONS

How much you enjoy swinging depends greatly upon how well it lives up to your preconceptions and what you hope to get out of it.

People

No matter what your opinion of swingers, it is undoubtedly correct and also incorrect. We can say that with confidence because our years of study and experience have uncovered such tremendous diversity that we know that someone, somewhere fits just about any image you could hold.

We know swingers of every adult age, race, economic status, educational level, and political viewpoint. Unquestionably, however, the white, middle and upper-middle classes are more than proportionally represented (within the United States, that is).

No matter who you are, no matter what your combination of needs and desires, it's probable that thousands (or, at least, hundreds) of people with similar backgrounds, ideologies, and current lifestyles are looking to mingle with you. We wish to emphasize this diversity

because we have met some very pleasant folks who tried swinging and soon dropped out due to differences between themselves and the people they encountered.

Inertia is a powerful force. If sexual interaction within a particular group is vaguely dissatisfying, suppressing such feelings often seems easier than to exert the physical and mental effort and take the emotional risks necessary to discover and join another group. Some people are at first ambivalent and then negative toward swinging simply because they aren't compatible with the people they have found.

A few reporters have written of differences between participants in San Francisco and those in Chicago or elsewhere, but any city has a few of every conceivable type. You have little excuse for not finding yours.

Style

Once you are mentally aware of the vast array of personality types you can meet, you are less likely to judge swinging based on a few limited encounters, and are more likely to hang in there and keep trying until you do find compatible people. The same thing goes for location and operating procedures.

You may discover several people you like and respect, yet be perturbed by the size of their group, or the location of their parties, or the personalities of others involved. Remember that the problem of meeting the right people in the right place at the right time is a universal difficulty. Don't assume that your newfound friends have discovered their ideal social situation. Once you have found people you like, don't be afraid to make suggestions; have a party; do it your way. Sooner or later you will get pretty much what you want ... if you keep trying.

Youth

Since the media portray the average sexually liberated couple as being in their late twenties or early thirties, many older people are attracted to swinging by thoughts of regaining their youth. This is sad but understandable. Sex and youth are the two most marketed human characteristics. Imagining one without the other is difficult for many younger people. While we don't wish to encourage ageism, we have observed that participants who refuse to recognize wide age disparities are seldom as happy as

those who understand the difference between sensuality and second childhood.

If you prefer to party with people twenty years your junior, and you feel accepted and successful doing so, all well and good. If, however, your potential playmates fail to react positively to your presence, don't blame swinging. You must decide which satisfactions you truly seek. If sexual variety is the important thing, find a group of like-minded people of similar maturity. If association with youth is your priority interest and sex is merely an affiliated and secondary aspect, seek ways of interacting that do not demand physical relating. Your experience and resources can do much to aid younger participants in exchange for their companionship.

Popularity

Social motivations rather than sensual ones often keep a couple in an unsatisfying rut. People who want to be part of whatever scene is currently in vogue sometimes associate themselves with those who fit their idea of the "beautiful people" even if the scene offers little physical or emotional satisfaction. After a while the glitter wears off and the image-seekers become disillusioned with swinging on the whole, although they never really experienced what it can be.

If you don't enjoy relating to people, or you're not really comfortable with the group you have found, the bubble is certain to burst. The only truly beautiful people are the people whom you love. It's worth your effort to find them.

Freedom

Is your job a real grind? Are you worried about your debts and sick of your in-laws? Many folks feel trapped in a hopelessly mundane life and yearn for excitement. Some find it in the realms of imagination ... others try swinging.

Lots of people who don't dare stand up to their boss or kick their obnoxious teenagers out of the house, are tantalized by the idea of violating repressive customs in reckless pursuit of sexual freedom.

In truth, this ploy often works, at least for a while. Swinging does provide exciting opportunities not available in most nuclear families, but it isn't likely to solve any of life's major difficulties. When that truth dawns

upon them, some people blame the lifestyle for their disappointment.

Marital Bliss

Multilateral sexual activity, like any other human activity, can be over organized, over advertised, and over sold until it looks like some magic potion that will cure all ills if taken as directed. This is regrettable nonsense, to say the least. Carefully explored, swinging can make a good marriage better. It can also make a bad marriage worse.

Security

Another reason for attending sex parties is the desire to be guilt-free by association. Do you enjoy watching or being watched but feel guilty when you do? If so, you might seek an environment in which "everyone else is doing it." Often, this works, but don't be too surprised if merely changing your surroundings fails to totally override long-term social conditioning.

The Recruiting Trap

Those who have recently seen the light might expect their "straight" friends and lovers to react positively toward swinging. In our experience, however, the rewards of selling sexual freedom are seldom worth the effort involved. Trying to convince others that your way is the *right* way is risky emotionally and physically.

We don't mean that you ought to refuse advice and assistance to those who do seek the same, just remember that swinging is available to everyone who cares for it. They will come when they are ready.

The Unreachable Constellation

If you're like many people, you started (or are about to start) swinging in the hope of "finding people like us." We wouldn't advise it, for several reasons. First, there is no person like you because no two people, or couples, are alike. Even if there were others just like you, you wouldn't recognize them because you don't have an objective view of what *you* are like. And if you did find that super compatible couple, you'd probably become bored quickly.

You are special. Don't get frustrated searching for the ethereal. Seek, instead, people who excite you, fascinate you, complement you, comfort you, and challenge you. You'll have much more fun that way.

Proving a Flaccid Point

Participants often claim that swinging increases sexual desire between marriage partners — and it can. Insofar as the experience is healthy, triggers individual growth, and thus makes each partner a better person, it can make the marriage a better union. Swinging will expose people to a variety of sex techniques that may increase conjugal pleasure. Also, the very sharing of a meaningful and enjoyable activity should bring a couple closer together.

Time and again, however, we read about couples arriving home from a strenuous swinging session and rushing to their bedroom, not to sleep, but to make glorious love on into the morning. This is fine for those who are truly turned on and inspired after an encounter. If you're new to such goings on, don't get your hopes up. Chances are you'll hardly be able to stay awake long enough to find the bedroom. If you really want to keep going, that's great, just don't feel you have to justify your actions or reassure your partner by risking death from exhaustion.

TOLERANCE

If you are contemplating the swinging life, or if you already enjoy such activities, you probably consider yourself an open-minded individual. Unfortunately, the odds are good that you are not. Even the most liberal culture has a substantial population of prejudiced people who fail to understand and often hurt those whose sexual preferences differ from their own. Regrettable as this is, it is understandable considering the mystery that has traditionally shrouded even sexual activities considered normal, let alone behavior labeled "deviant."

An Open-and-Shut Thing

Tolerance, unfortunately, doesn't always begin at home. We have heard swingers speak critically of others simply because they differed as to the whether a swinging encounter should be "open" or "closed."

The exclusively open swinger might view a desire for privacy as evidence of guilt or shame. The exclusively closed operator might view open people as seeking permission and approval from their mates and showing jealous anxiety over what might be going on behind closed doors.

Most participants seem to make healthy adaptations to either type, recognizing that there are positive benefits to both. Open encounters provide greater visual and aural stimulation and give opportunity for a wider variety of physical contact. They also allow husband and wife to share the experience directly, in the same way they would share any other entertainment such as tennis match or game of cards with friends. Closed interactions allow fewer distractions and better concentration while presenting the opportunity for closer communication and intimacy. They also give each partner stories to share the next day, or during the ride home. You probably have, or will develop a preference, and that is fine, as long as you and your mate agree. Whatever your choice, though, try not to be so absolute that any deviation leads to marital strife. A good marriage can tolerate, and benefit from, an occasional variance.

Different Strokes

Medical doctors, psychologists, social workers, and authors of every description get considerable mileage and money out of analyzing the sexual preferences of *homo sapiens*. This would be okay if they didn't generally present their speculations as fact, and refrained from moralizing their own viewpoints in pseudo-scientific terms. Even some authors who purport to be swingers speak of "perversions" and "fetishes," and imply that the roots of unusual activity lie in repressed guilt, fears, or just plain illness.

Such opinions may, in particular cases, be correct. The human psyche, however, is an extremely complex mechanism, and any generalized statement concerning it is bound to be false a lot of the time. When anyone listens to such comments and believes them, guilt and/or anxiety begin to have debilitating effects. Everyone has fantasies, if not open desires, that do not fit into the mainstream of socialized sex. It is disheartening to see the mental and emotional havoc that can be brought about by considering such commonplace thoughts as perverted.

Although the terms "perversion" and "fetish" do have precise definitions, they are usually employed as buzz words. As such, their operant definitions could be stated as follows:

Perversion: An activity that you don't desire to perform, and/or do not understand.

Fetish: An inclination or preference you do not share.

Before you criticize or react adversely to another's sexual tastes, consider who is being hurt. If a person is employing threats or other pressure on another to perform or submit to acts that are distasteful, your outrage is justified. Coercion has no place in human interactions of any kind and is absolutely proscribed in swinging.

Even when actions are carried out between freely consenting and willing adults, however, some people persist in being judgmental. Such busybodies claim that they are only interfering out of concern that the poor deviants are inflicting harm upon themselves.

The harm is often real enough, but its source is questionable. The physical and emotional problems of "perverts" are more likely caused by society's reaction to their proclivities, then by the acts themselves.

To illustrate: in our very recent past it was popular to scare young girls away from premarital sexual activity by telling stories of "bad" girls who had succumbed to temptation and, as a result, were besieged with emotional misgivings, loss of self-respect, pimples, and other horrible afflictions. It seems obvious today that the source of such tribulations (excluding the acne) was not the young girl's actions, but the culture itself. Baby sister isn't going to be emotionally scarred by "going all the way" unless mommy and daddy and the guidance counselor make a big fuss about it. Our sexual evolution still has a long way to go. Most so-called "perverts" would lead healthy lives pursuing their happiness along with life and liberty, if it were not for social criticism and ostracism.

But Not For Me?

Are you curtailing your fun unnecessarily by limiting the scope of your activities?

The most common qualification in personal ads is "no B&D." Presumably, many readers associate bondage with torch-lit underground chambers outfitted with chains and whips and are intimidated thereby. On the other hand, many sweet young couples are sometimes inclined to go into their early-American bedrooms and, using some old neckties, take turns tying one another to the four-poster. They have discovered that it is a different and pleasant sensation to be so restricted in their movements that they cannot respond or give, and can thus concentrate totally on receiving pleasure. More than a few couples report that such immobility has taught them

much about their own sensual tastes and responses without the distraction of reciprocating.

In the same vein, some people want to be spanked or whipped because they need to feel punished for their pleasure, or for some other circuitous emotional reason. However, if you should find that the blood rushing to the skin's surface as a result of slapping the buttocks or inner thighs produces definitely agreeable and sexy sensations, you could possibly practice such activity without fear of becoming a masochist.

All in all, bondage and spanking enthusiasts make up a very small proportion of swingers. On the other hand, people who enjoy some level of bisexual activity are ubiquitous. Our observations support the reports of other experts that 80 percent or more of women who are seasoned swingers enjoy sexual interactions with other women. For men, the percentage is much lower but still a significant 10 to 20 percent who have had some male-to-male sexual interaction. If the idea of bi-sexual encounters turns you on, wonderful; if it turns you off, that's okay too, but realize that you might change your mind as others obviously have. Researchers have noted that — *prior* to swinging — very few people have experienced any sexual contact as an adult with a person of the same gender. Apparently, something about the swinging experience encourages people to go exploring where they never went before.

These comments are not intended to convince you to try anything. We merely want to point out the validity of two cliches in swinging. One, "Things are not always what they seem," and two, "If you haven't tried it don't knock it."

PLAYFULNESS

Three mental elements of play are especially important to the enjoyment of party sex. Without *variety*, *spontaneity*, and *creativity*, we all might just as well stay home and clean the oven. While such characteristics are natural to the human species, allowing them free expression is not always easy.

Variety

You might assume that a lack of variety would not be a problem at all at a sex party, what with all those different shapes and sizes of human beings hopping around the mattresses. But variety of opportunity, while definitely an important plus, is not the issue here. All the different

partners in the world won't provide varied experiences if you approach every encounter with the same attitude.

Part of each of us values transcendent love; part of us desires mindless infatuation. We sometimes crave roughness and other times long for gentle caresses. In one mood we can appreciate group-gropes, in another mood we seek private intimacy. We all have a need to be aggressive and a need to be passive. A love of the same-old-security coexists with a fascination for the scary unknown.

All too often, we refuse to recognize the existence of such divergent needs within ourselves. Perhaps we seek security in a rigid definition of our personality. Perhaps our upbringing rewarded one approach while smothering other tendencies. Whatever the reason, many adults act as though they are single-faceted beings with one-dimensional needs. Such rigid behavior is inimical to playfulness.

Consider the fellow who has decided that he does not want physical intimacy with anyone over forty. Should he encounter the most delightful and delectable woman and discover that she is fifty-two years old, he faces a self-image crisis. If he hadn't settled on any one view of his sexual appetite in the first place, he could simply enjoy the pleasantries of the moment without worrying about whether or not he was being true to himself. The same is true of those who have self-imposed rules against swinging with people under 25, or people of a particular ethnic background, or whatever.

The bottom line is that we should not only refrain from putting other people into categories, we should likewise not label ourselves. We must recognize and appreciate the variety within ourselves before we truly can enjoy the variety of experiences available to us.

Spontaneity

You may believe that spontaneity means doing something without thinking about it. The truth lies in the opposite direction. We never do anything without a reason. Action without thought can only be action based on preconditioning or habit, and thus is likely to be the same action every time a similar stimulus is given. To respond to a situation spontaneously you must be able to overcome your ingrained behavior by conscious mental effort.

To be spontaneous, your mind must make a decision based upon the physical and emotional realities of the

moment. For most of us this is difficult. It often seems safer and easier to react to a situation in the same way we have always reacted when similar situations have arisen. When we do, we not only detract from our playfulness, we may miss out on a lot of pleasure altogether.

For example, if you desire to enjoy sex with someone but don't because the party just started and it's your habit to hang around the kitchen for the first couple of hours, and that person gets a call from his/her babysitter and has to go home early, you will suffer for your lack of spontaneity.

Creativity

Our including creativity as an important characteristic of social-sexual play doesn't mean that you must learn to paint stunning murals across your partner's buttocks. Being creative means inventing combinations, responses, or solutions that are new — or at least new to you.

If you feel dissatisfied with the way your parties have been working out, if your sexual activities never quite mesh with your sexual preferences, if you're just not having the fun you seek, try a bit more creativity. Swinging isn't a set of absolute behaviors; swinging is what you make it.

So you like to entertain but your partner would rather go out? Be creative; find another couple and give a party at their house, or at a restaurant, or in a locker room. So you want to lick pussy while your partner wants to play poker? Be creative; there are certain to be a few pussy-licking poker players around somewhere!

Chapter 9

HANDLING EMOTIONS

People who restrict their loved ones out of insecurity and suspicion never know if the love they receive is given by choice or because they demand it. This is tragic and unnecessary.

— Mimi Lobell

John & Mimi: A Free Marriage

Since swinging consists almost entirely of intense interpersonal interactions, your emotions play an exceptionally important role.

JEALOUSY

Just mention swinging or any other type of co-marital sex to a few of your non-involved friends (or strangers) and the reaction you get likely will involve jealousy. Some people believe that jealousy is a sort of instinct; others, pointing to cultures where jealousy is not evident, say it's a learned trait. Some will claim jealousy is always a bad thing; others wish that their mates were a bit more jealous.

In general terms, jealousy is a name given to a type of fear. All fears are emotions triggered by a sense of impending loss. For example, a mugger with a blade at your throat might cause you to feel terror — an intense fear of the immediate loss of your life. Whereas a newspaper article about burglaries in the neighborhood might cause you to feel anxiety — a lower intensity fear of losing your stereo system. In the same way, jealousy is the fear you feel when threatened with the loss or diminishment of a relationship. How strong the jealousy — how acute the fear — depends upon the importance you attach to the threatened relationship and how powerful you believe the threat to be.

When people are jealous, they experience fear-type reactions to one degree or another: from a general nervousness, restriction of breathing, and a tightening in the solar plexus, all the way up to blind rage in extreme cases.

The stereotype of the jealous husband shooting his wife and lover *in flagrante delicto* is an extreme case resulting mostly from cultural traditions. People who enjoy swinging are free of such chauvinism — it's been years since anyone got shot at one of our parties — but lesser

displays of jealous behavior do occur from time to time. And virtually everyone feels a twinge of jealousy now and then. It's rarely displayed or even admitted, but it is there.

Let's face it, everyone has spent a great deal of time creating a comfortable life. You are naturally concerned if you feel that you might lose your home, your car, your job, your status in the community, and myriad other things that compose your lifestyle and your security. One of the major, if not the most critical, components of your life is your relationship with other people. Although most folks these days recognize that they do not “own” these people, relationships are *things* in a very real way and people do *own* their relationships to the extent that they invest their personal comfort and identity therein.

Threats to relationships, like threats to property and finances, are facts of life. You are right to be concerned about such threats; you are justified in feeling anxious when they appear. Jealousy is a natural and understandable emotion.

Other books and articles that mention jealousy in the context of swinging and alternative lifestyles treat it as a symptom of personal failure. Readers are constantly admonished to reject jealous feelings for the sake of love, freedom, or mental health. Therefore, our view bears repeating boldly: **Jealousy is a natural and understandable emotion.**

Yet jealousy is also unpleasant. No matter how great the party, no matter how sensual the sex, you really can't enjoy yourself if you are feeling jealous of your partner. If your partner is jealous, you might enjoy yourself for a while, but you'll more than pay for that pleasure in the long run.

As with any pain, jealousy serves the important purpose of signaling that something requires attention and correction. That “something” is the relationship, not the immediate event that triggered the fear. How then, can one minimize jealousy?

We should note here that we are not certified marriage counselors or therapists. What wisdom we have to share is based not on listening to professors but on a combined 52 years of direct experience in alternative lifestyles and multilateral sexuality, supplemented, of course, by extensive reading and innumerable discussion groups.

To begin with, swinging is simply not for everyone. If you are unsure of your partner's commitment to your

relationship — if you feel that he or she is seeking someone to replace you — then you should definitely refrain from any multilateral sex activities until you have gotten counseling or gotten another partner. There are many ways swinging can revitalize relationships, but it can't resuscitate dead ones.

The first step to reduce or eliminate jealousy in swinging is to admit that you are not perfect. We each have some traits, feelings, and desires that are inexplicable, even quirky (what some would call sinful). Of course, we all prefer to maintain a facade of flawless respectability. In business, this facade is useful, even critical, and it's often necessary in social situations, but it is always dangerous when it interferes with personal introspection. So it is important to face your true self with honesty and compassion.

The next step is for you and your partner to discuss your likes, dislikes, fears, and desires with each other. This can be daunting. As we pointed out above, you have each put considerable effort and time into building a mutually satisfying relationship. Each of you likely believes that the other's participation in that relationship is based, in part at least, on that public persona that you project to the world and that you know isn't totally true. You naturally worry that revealing your less admirable characteristics might weaken your partner's support of your relationship ... Do it anyway!

As often as feasible, as much as possible, talk, converse, discuss, communicate with each other. This is critical to building a jealousy-resistant relationship, and the process will help each of you discover what you really like, what really turns you on, and what will make you really happy — both in swinging and in your personal sex play.

Try to be honest and open in what you say, trusting in your partner's love and concern for your relationship. Even more important, LISTEN carefully and tenderly to what your partner says. Be aware, however, that this is *not* mutual psychoanalysis. Your assignment is *not* to diagnose and correct problems. You don't have to share your partner's desires; you don't even have to understand them. Be cautious not to *judge* your partner and don't allow your partner to judge you. The goal is to learn about, adapt to, and compromise with each others' desires, so that you can help each other enjoy low-jealousy sexual play — and a better relationship overall.

Perhaps the most important factor is patience. With experience comes confidence, both in your ability to deal with threatening incidents and in your partner's commitment to you. Don't expect to be serenely self-assured at your first swinging encounter, of even your forty-first. If you had nothing to learn, life would be really boring.

The Rules

As you develop your personalized ("coupleized"?) approach to swinging, be vigilant against assumed commitments and hidden contracts.

When you were married, did you vow to "forsake all others"? Do you feel, deep in your heart, that such a commitment means you can't have caring relationships with others now?

Do you believe, or is there a child within who still believes, that adultery is a sin? If so, does the violation lie in the sex or in the lies? (Or in the videotape?)

Do your religious and community authorities demand female submission to male will? You might think the notion asinine yet still feel uncomfortable, if you're male, admitting that you prefer the female taking charge, or, if you're female, admitting that you like being dominant during sexual activities.

As people become more liberated and begin to question the bonds of church and state, they often replace regulations they find too restrictive with rules of their own design. These rules can be unspoken assumptions or they can be verbally agreed on or even written down. Usually the rules boil down to some form of the following agreements. Each is expressed here as the completion of the statement, "It (whatever) is okay as long as you do it ...

- ... only with someone I approve of."
- ... only if I'm there."
- ... only if I'm doing it also."
- ... only if you get my permission first."
- ... only if you tell me all about it later."
- ... only once."
- ... only if you use protection."
- ... only if you don't climax."
- ... only if you don't let on that I'm watching."
- ... only if you assure me that I'm better."
- ... only if you do it with me later (first, more, etc.)."
- ... only if you convince me that you didn't enjoy it."

Such agreements can be problematical. For one thing, *any* specified rule is really an entire set of implied rules. Any special approval gives either partner the ability to assume a multitude of disapprovals and to apply the idea of contract to the entire relationship. A participant's agreement to any rule gives his/her partner the ability to disallow any activity that displeases him/her by merely expanding the original agreement ... "But if such-and-such, then of course whatever."

Another concern is that, while they both might be created with equal rights, no two people are precisely alike. One partner will always be more influential in setting the original rules and in subsequently stretching them to the possible disadvantage of the other.

We suggest that you make whatever agreements seem helpful to you, but also agree that they are guidelines, not commandments. Allow occasional flexibility and be willing to adapt to changing conditions and new understandings. Above all, agree that any failure to conform to an agreement won't be taken personally as a betrayal of the relationship, only as a sign that adjustments need to be discussed.

That last statement is too important to just slide over, so here it is from another angle: More than a few perfectly functional relationships have been destroyed when one partner turns a tactical agreement into a critical contract and attaches grave consequences to its violation. This can result in people saying pretentious and self-defeating things to each other, like "I love you, but if I can't trust you to keep our agreement then I just can't live with you." The proper response to that sort of statement is a carefully considered and firmly delivered "BULLSHIT!" Insisting on perfection in a relationship is a pretty sure sign that you are afraid of revealing the imperfections in yourself.

An ideal relationship, we suppose, would need no agreements. Both partners would be constantly aware of each other's needs and react to them in a smooth and happy dance of fulfillment. When we meet that ideal couple, we'll let you know. Until then, to keep our sex lives playful and free of jealousy, we'll all have to exert a bit of effort—listening and talking and listening some more.

Dyadic Jealousy

Dyadic jealousy is the fear that your good friends might be taken away from you by another couple.

Couples rarely make formal agreements or sign written guidelines governing their relationship, yet every couple makes assumptions about the behavior of their friends. When their friends deviate from this behavior, a couple may feel betrayed. In swinging, with its emphasis on couple-to-couple compatibility and interactions, dyadic jealousy arises at least as frequently and often more intensely than it does elsewhere.

Dyadic jealousy is particularly likely to affect couples who are insecure in their own relationship. When John and Jane Doe come to the conclusion that they cannot meet all of each other's needs, they might go searching for another couple who will add all the missing ingredients and thus form a foursome that is whole and safe and secure. While pursuing such a fantasy *can* be educational and even growth inducing, the most predictable results are disappointment and recrimination.

In theory, dyadic jealousy can be conquered by the same patient communicating prescribed above. But in reality, relationships among four people are vastly more complex than between two. Likewise, the opportunities for paths to diverge are much more numerous.

Enjoy other couples as intimately and lovingly as you wish. But to seek permanency in a couple-to-couple relationship is to seek a level of control that you will never gain. Far better to spend the effort on improving the bond with your primary partner.

ENVY

Another detriment to effective emotional relating is envy. Whereas jealousy is a fear of losing something you believe you own, envy is a desire to own something you feel belongs to someone else.

Three types of envy can be debilitating in a party-sex scene: personal envy, dyadic envy, and gender envy. Personal envy is one person's envy of another who seems more attractive, better endowed, more skilled, or more virile. Dyadic envy is one couple's envy of other couples who appear to have more popularity or more fun. Gender envy is envy by men of women who apparently are better equipped physically to enjoy a wider range and greater

frequency of sexual encounters. Gender envy is also envy by women of men who might be more naturally inclined mentally and conditioned socially to enjoy sexual freedom.

Envy usually does not create as big a problem as jealousy, but it can interfere with the natural flow of pleasure and detract from the swinging experience. It is difficult to prescribe envy preventatives without getting over our heads in psychology, philosophy, and even religion. Moses didn't receive any words on jealousy, but the tenth commandment warns us against desiring that which cannot be ours. We think most people will agree with Yahweh on that one.

Envy springs from a dissatisfaction with what we are in comparison to others. Freeing yourself of envy therefore involves being what you want to be, better understanding what others are, and realize the validity of the difference. This might take a while to achieve ... like, several lifetimes. In the interim, just being on your guard against envy, recognizing it when you feel it, and being able to laugh at yourself, will usually be sufficient to keep it from spoiling the party.

EQUALITY

We group equality with envy and jealousy because the concept of equal rights, when applied to intimate personal relationships, is often misused until it becomes a tool for manipulation.

The greatest hazard of the "equal rights" contract is its ease of misinterpretation. What has auspicious beginnings as an agreement on equal rights often ends up being distorted into a standard for activity.

Comparing the number of people you have fucked with the number your spouse has fucked can only detract from your relationship. Most people realize this and are not so blatant as to keep a running tally. Nevertheless, other popular forms of score-keeping, while not so obviously fallacious, can be detrimental. Some people will avoid counting encounters, yet will keep careful track of opportunities. "You had your chance last week so tonight's mine ... You spent three hours in the bedroom, so we don't go home until I've had three hours too ... etc."

We really do believe in equality; we just don't think it is productive to endow any agreement with such authority that you can so easily wrap yourself up in its

protective folds whenever you don't get your own way. The attempt by one human being to control the activities, thoughts, or feelings of another human being by the imposition of rules is hazardous to both parties no matter how high-sounding those rules may be. Using a theoretical construct, such as equality, to defend your actions, rather than relying on the validity of your personal desires, is not only cowardly, it is unfair. And fairness is an important characteristic for anyone who wishes to deal successfully with other people.

INVOLVEMENT

Maintaining a beneficial attitude toward multilateral sexual activities isn't only a matter of dealing with negative emotions like jealousy and envy. Sometimes traditionally positive emotions such as infatuation and love are seen as equally threatening to the participant's welfare.

Swinging is often criticized for its lack of "meaningful" emotional involvement. A criticism that continues to amaze us. While we admit that love between party attendees is not the most common relationship, we do wonder to whom the critics are comparing swingers.

Are the bowling leagues of America filled with co-marital lovers? Is a bridge club to be condemned because its members don't develop deep emotional commitment before leading trump? Where does it say that infatuation is a prerequisite for sharing a beer and a barbeque? What social pastime in America *does* encourage its participants to develop deep meaningful emotional relationships outside marriage? Undeniably, swingers do not always love everyone, but what group does?

Couples who share sex with each other are just as likely, if not more likely, to share dinner, movies, family picnics, conversation, recipes, and birthday presents as are couples in any other group. So don't listen to those who knock swinging for its lack of meaningful involvement; it has more than any other group of ten million people they could name.

Love

Now that we've gotten that off our chests, we would like to offer some suggestions as to how personally to deal with love in a positive and pragmatic way.

For every definition of "swinging" there must be a thousand definitions of "love." We favor Jubal Har-

shaw's: "Love is that condition in which the happiness of another person is essential to your own."¹⁵

For our purposes here, the most important word in this definition is "condition." Love is not something that exists between you and another person. Love is the way you feel inside. Thus, your loving someone is not dependent upon that someone loving you. The way another person feels about you is an attribute of that person and cannot affect you. Only *your* feelings affect you. You, as a normal human being, need to love. You do not have an inborn need to be loved.

Many different people simultaneously can stimulate loving feelings within you. Any parent with several children will confirm this. Not only can you love more than one person at a time, but the more people you love the easier and better you love. That is, your feelings of love grow stronger as you exercise your "love muscles."

We suppose it possible that Jesus managed to practice what he preached and enjoyed the feeling of loving everyone he knew. No one we know has the time or the capability to do the same. With our limited resources most of us do well to love a handful of people in our lifetime.

Love, of itself, is always good. Loving fellow sex-party attendees is a great feeling and we heartily recommend it. BUT, be very careful how you handle it. Allowing yourself to enjoy the feeling that loving brings to you is one thing; trying to turn every love into a relationship is quite another.

Relationships are great consumers of time and effort, and you most likely don't have enough of either to support more than one good relationship. So, enjoy the love that others cause you to feel, and treat them in turn with tenderness and respect, but know that love makes no demands. If what you are feeling is so intense and absorbing that you must devote yourself to the person who triggers that feeling, then it isn't love, it's infatuation.

Infatuation

When you love someone, their happiness is *essential* to yours. For example, a bouquet of roses, a flattering husband, and dinner at the best restaurant in town won't make a mother happy if one of her children is sick. If the loved child isn't happy, the loving mother cannot be

happy because the child's happiness is essential to her own. However, the mere fact that the child is happy is not sufficient to make the mother happy (particularly if hubby forgot their anniversary).

If the happiness of another person is all that matters to you, you have an emotional relationship of another color. You are infatuated.

Infatuation is a rare and wonderful feeling. It doesn't last as long as love, but it will dominate your life even more. Teenagers often do dumb things, like get married, while under its spell. Adults often do dumb things, like get divorced.

Some enchanted evening, when your eyes meet a stranger's across a crowded bed, and you suddenly feel as though the mattress fell through the floor, you should remember three things. (1) Admit it, to yourself, to your lover, and to your spouse. (2) Enjoy it. (3) Realize that it won't last forever and don't make any major alterations in your life because of it.

If your spouse becomes infatuated with another person, there is only one wise course of action: do nothing. Don't cry, don't complain, don't criticize. Infatuated individuals are inclined to compare the new "love" with the "old" one. The nastier you are, the worse you will fare. Just remain the same loving, supportive partner, secure in the knowledge that good companionship and shared experiences will win out over puppy love every time. Well ... almost every time.

¹⁵Jubal is a character in Robert Heinlein's novel, *Stranger In A Strange Land*.

Chapter 10

PARTY PREPARATIONS

It's a given in swinging that sexual sharing can be a beneficial plus to a relationship, but it will not turn a bad marriage into a good one. So too, merely allowing or encouraging sexual interaction will not turn a bad party into a good one. To have a better sex party you must begin with a good "normal" party.

Fortunately for most of us, money is not the key. Some people may achieve a good if not memorable party while providing nothing more elaborate than a case of beer and a bowl of popcorn. Others are satisfied with nothing less than a catered affair replete with orchestra and fireworks. [Sounds good, doesn't it? We sure wish they would invite us.] No matter how pedestrian or extravagant your taste, if you are gracious, thoughtful, and imaginative, your party is bound to be fabulous.

If you are not thought of as **gracious** — if you lack that special talent for making folks feel liked and important and at ease — we suggest a direct appeal either to God or Dale Carnegie. There's not much we can do for you here beyond repeating the Golden Guideline: "Treat your guests the way you would like to be treated."

By **thoughtfulness**, we mean being aware of the basic needs of your guests. The first step to a superb bash is making sure that your guests are never: hungry, thirsty, cold, hot, crowded, isolated, exploited, molested, irritated, blinded, deafened, insulted, encumbered, oppressed, nauseated, anxious, lonely, suffocated, exposed, frightened, embarrassed, intimidated, bored, shocked, nervous, excluded, or bothered.

Once you have accomplished that little trick, you can spend your time being **imaginative**, thereby raising your party from good to great. More on that in the next chapter.

An important caveat before we get started: perfection is unattainable. Although we like to think that no one throws better sex parties than we do, we must also admit that we always fail to do one or more of the things we recommend in the following pages. Don't worry about being flawless hosts — you'll only become frustrated and spoil your fun.

INVITING IDEAS

Some fanciful evening you will be sitting with your significant other on your flowered couch, watching an *X-Files* rerun when your door bell will chime and twelve luscious ladies and a dozen handsome men will rush in carrying bottles of expensive liquor and yelling "SURPRISE!"

Until that moment arrives you're going to have to issue some sort of invitation if you expect anyone to come to your party. To assist, we offer this list of factors to consider before you start recruitment procedures.

How Big

People have different tastes in party size, so you should try to give each guest some idea of the number of attendees expected. This will not only increase general satisfaction, it should keep you from being badgered all evening with "Is anyone else coming?"

Determining the optimum size for your party requires more intuition than mathematics. Even so, one of these formulas may prove useful to those who are unsure or inexperienced.

Bed Check: Count the number of available surfaces suitable for prone positions (single bed = one, double or king = two). Multiply this figure by two. The result is the number of couples to have. If you have other activities (such as dancing) to occupy guests, or other facilities (such as a pool or spa) for guests to occupy, then you can increase the factor to three or four.

Center Court Capacity: Limit your guests to no more than the number of people who can fit (standing up) into the living room or whatever space you are using as neutral territory.

You will, no doubt, have to invite a larger number than the ideal attendance. The number of no-shows increases with party size. If everyone you invite always comes to your parties, stop reading this now ... and write your own book. We'd all love to know your secret.

The Uncoupled

There are four schools of thought on the sensitive issue of inviting single guests.

- **Single Men Only:** This viewpoint is usually based on the observation that men wear out faster than women and could thus use reinforcements.

- **Single Women Only:** A stand most often taken by men whose fantasies include either being caressed by several females simultaneously or watching two women have sex. This is supported by a tendency for women to be more accepting of their bisexuality than men are of theirs.
- **No Singles:** Rooted in numerical equality, this view is the most common despite its unfortunate overtones of spouse trading. Some claim that singles should be avoided because they are more apt to become emotionally involved and try to break up a marriage. We say, if your marriage is that shaky you ought to be spending your evenings elsewhere. Often “no singles” is a necessary compromise between advocates of men only and women only. As mentioned previously, the theoretically greater risk of disease among singles is a real though slight threat, and rarely the true motivation for their exclusion

There is one other reason for concern about the participation of single people; a minor reason but a legitimate one nonetheless. We are all painfully aware of the numerous social misfits currently loose upon the earth. People with tendencies toward dangerous, obnoxious, or just inappropriate behavior don't normally wear warning signs and are often not detected via casual observation. It is possible to meet a single woman, for example, who eagerly accepts your invitation to a sex party and then freaks out half way through and starts running through your house screaming at the other guests. Of course, couples can be misleading also, but forming and maintaining a relationship does require some degree of emotional stability and mental health. So, unsettling incidents are less likely if you limit your invitation list to couples who have been together for awhile.

- **No Matter:** It sounds great to say that the party should be open to all of your friends, attached or unattached. Carefully balancing your group based on possession of tits and pricks does have overtures of pimping and assumes that everyone will be in an equally horny mood. On the other hand, a marked imbalance of men and women carries its own assumptions that you might not intend.

Even if you don't care which gender is better represented, as a responsible host you should be certain that any sexual imbalance does not exceed the ability of your guests to cope with it. As a rule, if you want to invite singles, keep it balanced within 10 percent.

Remember, also, that swinging is essentially for couples; you should never allow singles to interfere with or limit the activities of the coupled attendees. Let's say, for example, that you know two or three really nice single

guys that you invite to your party, using the rationale that extra men can take up the slack when the husbands peter out. This can be acceptable, *provided* that these nice singles don't start the party by hustling the women into the bedrooms. Husbands left sitting around by themselves are unlikely to attend one of your parties again — and they probably won't let their wives come either!

One good way to reduce such unwanted competition is to have the singles (male or female) arrive several hours after the party starts.

Tried and True

What about inviting couples that you have just recently met? This can be a good way to get to know new contacts in a social/sexual situation without the pressures inherent in a couple-to-couple encounter. Yet some might view a new and unproven face (or crotch) as a threat to group security and/or harmonious socializing. After all, if you meet a new couple at a hotel and they turn out to be obnoxious partyers, they have only ruined one evening rather than your entire party.

We advise not allowing the number of un-vouched-for couples to exceed 20 percent of your group in any case. Know your guests, and your guests shall keep you free.

Put It In Writing

For the most part, invitations to sex parties are issued verbally, although e-mail is making inroads. Written invitations, via whatever type of mail, have some advantages. First, they are more accurate. Consistently giving clear and complete instructions and directions is a difficult task over the telephone . . . and maps are really tough. Another advantage is that the written invitation remains (on the refrigerator or wherever) as a reminder of the party. You might also use the note as a ticket to your affair if the size of the group makes it desirable to do so. And, if your party *is* big, mailing invitations (even in envelopes) is less time consuming than making all those calls. Then there is the matter of prestige; we use e-mail supplemented by the telephone for many events, but for our grand parties each year we have the mail carrier deliver our written invitations.

Originality

You might give your guests a preview of the imaginative soiree you plan by using an unexpected format for your written invitations. Some people find it humorous to use cards intended for baby showers or children's birthday parties. Others use brown wrapping paper, tin cans, or any unusual surface.

If such is not your cup of tea, consider writing your invitation in the form of a personal ad.

C-36,25,35-OK WE DESIRE YOU to attend our swing party. Discreet, sincere hosts are eager for your arrival at 787 Slippery Street. Phone Nick & Nora at 555-2469. No B/D, Yes BYOB. See you Saturday the 18th at 9 p.m. RSVP.

If you don't feel particularly creative, you can still be different and make a great impression: write a note by hand!

The Essentials

Try to make sure that your guests understand that sexual interactions between guests will be anticipated, accepted, encouraged, or whatever. On the other hand, remember that a paper invitation might be discovered by children, neighbors, or maids, so don't be too obvious in writing.

Double check to make sure you have included the date, time, proper dress, and your telephone number. This might seem obvious but, at one time or another, we have received invitations lacking each of these essential elements.

Don't leave people guessing about donations. If your guests are expected to bring their own alcohol, snacks, or anything else, tell them so. If they need to bring nothing, volunteer that information also.

BYOB

Try enlivening the old liquor request with variations such as specifying wine or unusual beers. A tasting can be an entertaining diversion: wine and beer are good for this, but you could be novel—if not bizarre—and have everyone bring a different brand of vodka, bourbon, tequila, or even cola. If you use blindfolds, the possibilities for other interesting activities are endless.

THE PLAYPEN

Once you have issued the invitations, it's time to prepare your castle for the festivities. Advance planning improves all arrangements. Here, as in most social situations, thoughtfulness is more valuable than money.

You might think that following all of the advice given here will mean a lot of work ... well, it does. Hosting a sex party *is* a big job, hosting a *great* sex party is a really big job. But someone's got to do it, and the more you do it, the easier it gets.

While most folks get the basics down, the special things make a party great. We are still surprised at how little thought some hosts give to ambiance. The most affluent are typically the least aware of mood, as if they expected a fancy house and expensive furniture to impress everyone into bed. Of course, you're not like that—you must care or you wouldn't be reading this—so pay close attention.

Objects and Surfaces

Decide which surfaces are suitable fields for jousting. If any space that looks large enough to hold a body in semi-prone position is unstable, unsound, or unsafe, render it unappetizing. A table, for instance, that has weak legs and cannot be strengthened or hidden should be covered with food, books, pine boughs, or other items uncomfortable to human buttocks.

Carefully inspect those surfaces that might be suitable for supporting two or more bodies (beds, carpets, couches, counter tops, etc.) and give them a flight test if possible; getting ready for a party should be fun too! That couch may be fine to sit on, but what forgotten needles (sewing or pine) lurk in its crevices awaiting a naked toe? That mattress on the floor may look like a great spot for fun and games, but will violent activity cause the painting above it to fall upon an unwary head? Even your trusty innerspring in the master bedroom could be surrounded by lamps, tables, and extension cords that nightly avoid two people but will become hazardous in the presence of six sets of arms and legs.

Not only beds, all areas of your home should be considered. Study the place carefully, imagining a large group of active people who are concerned more with each other than with your decor. Try to spot problem areas in advance. Ask both "What damage can they do to our house?" and "What damage can our house do to them?"

Swingers generally are considerate people, and their parties rarely become drunken brawls. Nevertheless, they are often nude, and they do get sweaty, and they do get oily. They do get wet from showers, and they might just sit on your new couch in any of these conditions. Guests will often have good reason to be distracted and not watch where they are walking (or crawling). People do get excited and some may even thrash about, knocking over glasses or bottles.

You cannot make your home impervious to all mishap, but if you worry over spilled milk, or bourbon, or semen, you won't enjoy yourself. If you aren't enjoying yourself, your guests will be uncomfortable. So put away delicate and expensive items or limit your party to those areas of the house with the sturdiest, most easily cleaned furnishings.

The Most Popular Room

At any party, convenient, clean, workable toilets and lavatories are necessary. At a swinging party their importance is greatly magnified. Your guests will have an almost constant need for every facility traditionally found in a bathroom. Besides using the commode for all conceivable purposes, guests will find reason to wash everything from their genitals to their ears in your bathtub, shower, and sink. They will comb their hair, apply makeup, remove makeup, and carefully inspect their faces and adornments in the mirror.

Have you ever noticed that nude people are more relaxed and tend to make greater use of bathroom facilities? For example, if you are standing in formal dress in your host's privy and you notice that one of your toenails is hurting your foot, you would probably simply make a mental note to trim the nail when you arrive home. On the other hand (foot?), if you are in the same situation except that you aren't dressed at all, you might very well rummage around, find a nail clipper, and see to the offending toenail immediately. Any such activity will reduce available bathroom time for others.

Keeping your parties small or building scads of bathrooms are two ways to avoid people squatting in your backyard. If you love large parties and hate supporting plumbers, we offer these few suggestions: Put up a "No-Loitering" sign. Eliminate any comfortable resting place (except, of course the absolutely necessary one). Put well-lighted mirrors elsewhere. Scatter canisters of premoistened towelettes around the bedrooms. Install low-wattage

lightbulbs. Remove the lock from the bathroom door. Remove the door.

The Second Most Popular Room

If people congregate in your kitchen at straight parties, they will congregate in your kitchen at sex parties. Unless you have a kitchen suitable for such socializing, put your bar (ice, glasses, water, etc.), and snack tables in other rooms. Then employ tactics similar to those given above: install very bright lights, remove chairs, put up signs, etc.

Under Wraps

A common problem at straight parties that is greatly magnified at a swinging party is what to do with coats. Putting them on a bed doesn't work, all those buttons and zippers may scratch some delicate derriere. Since no one ever has enough closet space, we suggest obtaining a portable clothes rack. Several types of inexpensive metal or wooden racks fold or disassemble when not in use. Just make sure it can't fall over on something delicate. Another approach is the creative use of hooks, dowels, or knobs as both wall decorations and supplemental clothes catchers.

Life and Breath

From the standpoint of basic needs, the most important thing in your home isn't the bed, the TV set, or even the bathroom. In a recent dependent survey, 80 percent of all participants questioned admitted that air was more important than sex.

Fresh, circulating air of the proper temperature is more appreciated at a sex party than at any other type of get-together outside of the Vikings' locker room. If your house has a good air conditioner, cleaner, and humidifier, you are in great shape. If not, we can do little to help other than suggest burning a lot of candles, which is said to help remove dust and smoke from the air. Of course you could open your windows if the neighbors aren't too close and your guests don't get too loud. Perhaps it is worth the effort to install fans or other ventilators.

What temperature is proper will usually be warmer than normal in deference to the lack of clothing, but not too warm in respect for all that heavy exercise. If your guests find it cold, they might go home early; if they find it hot, they might go to sleep. You can't please everybody but you should at least stay attuned to environmental conditions and make adjustments as you are able.

Tobacco Rules

Smoking seems to be on the decline, but not as rapidly among swingers as elsewhere. We observe that between 30 and 40 percent of swingers (of all ages) smoke cigarettes, especially when they are drinking alcohol. Also, cigars have been making quite a comeback recently. This means that a good portion of your invitation list likely consists of people who will want to smoke at your party.

If you are nonsmokers, you are well within your rights to have a smoke-free home. Being gracious hosts, however, means doing whatever is feasible to make all of your guests comfortable, and a smoker deprived of an occasional cigarette is definitely not comfortable. Neither is one forced to stand outside in cold or wet weather. Of course, you could just not invite anyone who smokes, but that's a bit draconian and you'll not only miss out on their company but the chance to party with all those they might introduce you to in the future. So look around for a place that is tolerably comfortable where you could allow smoking — a garage, a covered porch, or a room where you can install a window fan. Some people we know allow smoking in their kitchen, where the ventilation is good and there are few surfaces that will absorb or retain odors. Having established such a haven, make it clear to everyone (smokers and nonsmokers alike) where smoking is okay. And, finally, most smokers these days are very sensitive to their situation and will appreciate it if you don't make a big deal out of it.

Likewise, if you smoke, you have every right to partake in your home, even when holding a party. You also have an obligation, as gracious hosts, to accommodate nonsmokers. One step in this direction is to ask people not to smoke in the bedrooms. This also makes sense from a safety viewpoint, and discourages lingering on valuable bed space. If your home is large enough, designate one area or floor as a no-smoking haven. You should definitely keep an air cleaner running in the main party area, and circulate the air in your home as much as possible. (Most forced-air furnaces have an option to keep the fan running, even when the heat or AC is off.) Speaking of furnaces, most home-improvement stores sell furnace filters that can remove smoke particles; buying one is an investment that will earn you much appreciation from non-smokers.

Incense, Etc.

Good air circulation is the best way to eliminate odors. Most cover-up sprays, scented-candles, and powders will merely add to respiratory problems. A light scent is fine to set a mood, but even fresh air can be ruined with clouds of bayberry or pine. Remember, your guests will be breathing very hard at times.

A Healthy Glow

Lighting is one of the two best ways to induce a desired mood. (The other is music.) The major thing is to avoid bright lights and harsh shadows, but color should also be carefully considered. Red lights may seem a devilish idea, but they can promote anxiety and create disastrous distortions of the color combinations in your guests' attire. Blue and green lights create an impression of coldness and make healthy skin look sickly. Yellow lights, if soft, will warm up a cool room considerably while maintaining acceptable skin tones. Pink probably does the best all-around job of any available bulb color. But color isn't really necessary; normal incandescent bulbs on dimmers will do nicely.

The optimum illumination is good old-fashioned candlelight. Large, extravagant, expensive candles give off no better light than small simple ones. We have found that glass cups (clear or colored) with inexpensive unscented votive or tea candles are the easiest, cleanest, cheapest, and safest way to provide candlelight. They can be beautiful, and the shaded flames have a definite advantage over standard candles. For a longer lasting flame use oil lamps ... very stable oil lamps.

While strobes and flashing colored lights are sometimes conducive to uninhibited dancing, it takes uncommon powers of concentration to enjoy fucking in the frenetic atmosphere they create, so keep them out of the bedrooms.

Blackout

Totally dark rooms are dangerous. Some people may like obscurity but nobody likes stubbing their toes on the bureau. Neither is it appreciated when someone comes looking for a lost item and turns on a bright light. Those who feel more intimate and/or risqué cavorting in the shadows might consider one or more of these lighting techniques.

- Use an ultraviolet fluorescent (black) light. Always shade the bulb from direct line-of-sight. These “hippie” lights seem to be making a minor comeback, but care must be taken to avoid rampant gaudiness.
- Draw patterns on obstacles or ceilings with luminescent paint. Again, this takes a bit of artistic flair to carry off.
- Put small shaded lights very close to the floor to delineate pathways clearly while only slightly illuminating the rest of the room by reflected light.
- If nothing else is feasible, buy and plug in a bunch of inexpensive night lights.

There is little value in carefully preparing a darkened room if the corridor outside remains brightly lit. Changes in illumination level should be gradual from room to room. This makes it easier to enter and exit without discomfort and avoids sudden brilliance within the room when the door is opened.

Most open participants don't mind an occasional partyer pausing in his/her rounds and quietly observing their activities. Some might be disturbed, however, if they are unable to distinguish the identity of a watcher silhouetted in the door frame. Placing a small light to illuminate anyone standing in the doorway is a considerate touch.

Sound Affects

Even though they know the way music affects mood, many party givers will still play loud rock music in every room of their house throughout the proceedings. We do not mean to suggest that you shouldn't play music that you personally enjoy. We do advise that you don't force it down people's auditory canals. Whatever your tastes, a conversation area and at least some bedrooms should be free of loud or harsh music.

You can go further and creatively employ music to structure and control the flow of your party. If you have a long-playing tape system or can program multiple CDs or DVDs, you can shift activity gears automatically. Otherwise, you will probably be called on to stop whatever fun you are having and attend to the music numerous times. Think about the ideal progression of events from the first hello to the last grunt. Then consider where you want quiet music, dance music, active music, sensual music, etc.

External Security

No matter how well you plan the festivities, they won't be very festive if they are unexpectedly interrupted by outside agents. Few of us can afford to live in a fortress or give parties on private yachts at sea. There are, however, a few less exorbitant measures that will reduce the risk of embarrassment or incarceration.

Take steps to prevent those accidental interruptions that are humorous in tv sitcoms but grim in real life. Pay the paper carrier in advance. Return the rug-shampooer to your neighbor. Put a “No Solicitors” sign on your front gate. Make certain that your guests do not block your neighbor's driveway or leave their car lights on. Figure out who has unexpectedly come to your door in the last year, and take whatever steps you can to prevent their returning on party night. Don't tell your straight friends or relatives that you won't be home; they might be driving by and decide to investigate the noise. Chain a large gorilla to your front porch.

Try not to draw attention to your house ... We were kidding about the gorilla. Pull the shades or curtains in *every* room and hallway window that offers neighbors or passersby a view of your home's interior. Remember that nude people will wander everywhere in your house that is open. Consider any possible reasons for leaving the house. Do you keep your firewood in the garage? Better cover the windows there also.

Little attracts the curious and the annoyed more than party sounds drifting across suburban lawns. Even if you live in a downtown apartment complex, a woman's screaming can attract suspicious attention. The sounds of ecstasy are very hard to distinguish from the sounds of agony. Therefore, unless you have very liberated or very distant neighbors, insulate your home well and keep the windows closed. (Yes, we know that we just spoke of the need for fresh air—there are tradeoffs in everything.)

If you have a security system that sets off a siren or automatically calls for help when triggered, turn it off for the duration of the party.

Assume that now and then your security preparations will fail and an unwanted visitor will appear at your door during a party. What if your neighbor needs his car jump started? What if some punk spray paints your car and the police come to inform you? Plan your reaction carefully. We aren't suggesting that you run your guests through an emergency drill, merely that you think over

the possible situations in advance. For instance, does your front door have small windows near the top or down the sides? Cover them. Consider what portion of the party area is in view from the front doorstep. If you don't have a private foyer, setup a folding screen or hang a curtain. Keep a few clothes near the entrance or at least a robe. Hang a mirror near the door so you can be sure you haven't got any semen in your hair before you attempt to discourage the cookware salesman.

Internal Security

The average sex party runs a much lower chance of being impaired by the appearance of neighbors and police than by the presence of children and pets.

You may think it's cute if little Jimmy gets out of his bed and wanders wide-eyed across a carpet of heaving flesh while calling for mommy. Chances are your guests will be less than amused. No matter what your personal beliefs about the proper exposure of children to sex, some will disagree. If you wish to prevent your guests from embarrassment or discomfort, stash the little people somewhere else for the evening. If you can't find an away-from-home babysitter, consider installing some device that will signal you when the child gets out of bed. Of course, if your child is old enough, discipline alone may suffice. Organizing a babysitting co-op is more reliable.

Of all the possible disruptive influences, pets are the most frequent and flagrant offenders. Of all the kinds of pets people own, the most common are likely to wreak the most havoc. Guard dogs, cougars, and boa constrictors are usually recognized as dangerous and secured far away from the revelry. Cocker spaniels and Persian pussies often are left free to stalk their home turf without concern for tourists. People who immediately recognize the inadvisability of allowing children to roam free during an orgy are often blind to the harmful potential of their favorite feline or canine. If you think of your pet as a dear and harmless companion who just naturally belongs wherever you may be, please consider these few words.

In the first place, many human beings are genuinely and seriously uncomfortable in the presence of pets. Allergies to dog and cat hairs are not at all uncommon. Phobias rooted in forgotten childhood cannot be laughed away, and fleas can create quite a disturbance in a crowded bed.

In the second place, a pet is either going to be active or inactive. If it is inactive, it becomes a landmine waiting for some unwitting guest to step, sit, or lie on the poor thing. If it is active, it is either friendly or hostile. If it is hostile, somebody will attempt to prove a skill at handling animals and get bitten or scratched. If the pet is friendly, it is likely to continually stick its nose (cold) and its tongue (wet) where it is not appreciated.

Best by far to keep all nonhuman entities away from the party.

Whenever a room is reserved for pets or children or whatever, put clear "off limits" signs on the door.

NICE AND NECESSARY

In theory a swinging party requires only privacy, warmth, security, light, air, a toilet, and, of course, a few friendly guests. In actual practice numerous other items are extremely useful.

Supplies

Once you have the place arranged to your satisfaction, stock it properly to keep everything running smoothly.

In the Bathroom: Extra rolls of toilet paper (use only the best) should be in an obvious and easy to find place. Find a liquid handsoap that is both antibacterial and good at removing odors; fingers and cocks can find their way into some quite stinky places. You can never tell when someone will want to bathe more thoroughly, so stock the tub with the basics: a soap that rinses easily, shampoo, conditioner, and a shower cap. You'll need many towels — fancy is nice; absorbent is better. And, a safe, powerful, hair dryer will often come in handy, even in the powder room.

In the Bedrooms and Other Play Areas: Place a box of tissues within easy reach of every mattress and couch. (Few guests will enjoy picking little shreds of paper off their genitals, so don't cheap out here.) Along with the tissues, the considerate host will supply high-quality sexual lubricants, and canisters of wet wipes are a pleasing touch. Lots of pillows and cushions will be appreciated by your guests; washable ones will be appreciated by you. Likewise, clean sheets and soft blankets. If you think we're getting too detailed here, then you are fortunate not to have shared our experiences at parties where the mattresses were left bare and no pillows were to be found.

At the Bar, In the Kitchen: Ice is critical, lots of ice. Unless you have a gargantuan ice maker, buy bags (small cubes) and keep in a cooler. Ice is cheap, buy more than you think you could possibly use; you sure don't want to have to go out at one a.m. to get more.

If people are bringing food, put serving bowls, baskets, platters and utensils out in the open so you won't have to stop socializing to "find something to put this in."

Unless you relish a reputation as a tightwad, don't offer store-brands of mixers; find Coke, Pepsi, etc. on sale and stock up; both diet and regular. Supply ginger ale, tonic water, and club soda, even if you never drink it. If for nothing else, the club soda will come in handy for removing wine stains from carpeting. Speaking of spills, paper towels and sponges should be where your guests can easily find them.

The Be-Prepared-for-the-Worst Checklist

These are all critical items. Don't have a party without them.

- fire extinguisher
- first aid kit
- toilet plunger
- condoms
- spot remover
- extra light bulbs
- flashlights and extra candles
- clothes hangers
- pad of paper and pen — by all accessible telephones

Videos

The off-premise swinger's club we attend most often is at a restaurant with several televisions hung in typical fashion above the bar. On party nights, the club operator shows x-rated videos on all the screens. A few of our friends have picked up on this idea and will show such videos on their home television(s) when they host a party. You might have done so yourself. You also might have found that the effect wasn't what you expected. To make certain that videos improve your party, consider the following.

Let's face it, most so-called "adult" videos are really childish. The plots are simplistic, the acting mundane, and most tenth graders could write better dialogue. And the soundtrack mix of trite jazz and phoney moaning is more sleep-inducing than stimulating. Of course, if such

videos were actually good films, they would be too distracting to use as background at bars and parties. For such use, we recommend choosing videos that are mostly action, and showing them with the sound turned off.

For some people, x-rated videos will be a turn-on, others will mostly ignore them, and a few might find them disconcerting or even depressing. Showing them can seem a bit pushy, as if you were urging guests to perform rather than encouraging them to interact. Don't go overboard, therefore, and inundate your guests with scenes of sexual gymnastics in every room of the house.

One idea we like, is showing old-time "classic" sex films or x-rated animated "cartoon" videos. These can be both funny and sexy ... What better combination for a playful party?

Eating In

Books and articles that provide recipes and hints for entertaining usually assume that guests will be clean, calm, and clothed. Today's aware host will recognize that certain special preparations are called for by the excited, oily, naked, sweaty guests likely to be seeking nourishment at a sex party.

Should your entree consist of a bowl of potato chips and a tin of dip there is little to concern yourself with other than accessibility. If you are so afraid of ruining your rug or couch that you keep all of your refreshments in the far corner of your kitchen then you shouldn't be having a party in the first place.

When you plan to serve something more substantial or appetizing, however, there are a few more things to consider.

Whatever guests are expected to hold in their laps should be not too hot, cold, or flexible. Paper plates in wicker holders (or their equivalent) are usually an acceptable way of ensuring insulation and rigidity. Lots of large strong napkins will also add to the nude diner's sense of security.

Eliminate the need for knives. Their use is difficult in the precarious positions likely to be assumed by your guests and they are one more thing to carry around and, all too often, drop. If your specialty can't be scooped up with spoon, fork, or fingers, make it bite-sized.

If you are preparing a dinner, it's good to limit the number of items to the number of servings that will fit

onto a single plate. Quality is better than variety, anyway — even in swinging.

Chapter 11

SEX PARTIES: THE ACTION

The importance of proper preparation cannot be over-emphasized, but the success or failure of your party hinges mostly on what happens after your guests arrive. As obvious as this seems, many hosts act completely oblivious to it. There is an unfortunate practice, at least in America, of people *throwing* parties rather than *giving* them. That is, the hosts carefully prepare the package and then sort of toss it at the guests and abdicate all responsibility for what happens next. Providing the basic necessities and then letting your guests do their own thing is risky business. Don't camouflage laziness as personal freedom.

The following is a discussion of the actions and activities successful sex-party hosts might use to create interest, cohesion, excitement, involvement, and pleasure among their guests.

OPENING MOVES

The first few moments of a party have an inordinate effect on its overall quality.

Be Ready

It is as important for the host couple to be fully prepared to welcome their guests to a swinging party as to any other affair. Perhaps more so. Being the first couple to arrive at any function is a rather questionable accomplishment. Don't make it any more uncomfortable for the first arrivals by leaving them alone with their apprehensions while you finish dressing or preparing the hors d'oeuvres. Make them feel as if the party started when they stepped through your doorway, or else they may not arrive at so courteous an hour the next time. This is doubly important if they are new to your home.

Be Certain

If anyone shows up at your party whom you have not personally observed at a similar party in the past, it is a good idea to inform them that sexual activities are likely

to occur. This need not be a blatant pronouncement, merely a hint or comment about some past incident or future plan. Used properly, such a warning might prevent unpleasant misunderstandings later if an overanxious guest has brought an unwitting date.

Be Informative

Every guest who is not familiar with your home should be personally taken on a guided tour. Having a mental image of the location and contents of the surrounding rooms is integral to anyone's feeling of being comfortably at home. Swingers also have a greater need than others to know such facts as the location of the light switch in the master bedroom, and the idiosyncracies of the bathtub faucets.

Point out the location of the bar, bathrooms, bedrooms, and exits. Warn everyone of any tricky steps, low ceilings, etc. Mention any necessary dress codes for meandering about the backyard. Explain where the smoking area is. Reduce tension and prevent undesirable surprises by telling each guest if children or pets are on the premises. In other words, tell them everything you would appreciate knowing if the roles were reversed. But please refrain from making long speeches or reciting a list of rules and regulations.

When your guests are wearing coats, be sure to show them where you are putting them. Merely saying that you will put them in the den is insufficient. No one likes to have to dig through a pile of other people's belongings to find their condoms or a lipstick in their own jacket pocket. "Follow me and I'll show you where to put your coats," is a good way to lead off a tour of the facilities. Note: If someone comes in the door pleading for the bathroom, or asking for a drink, or seeking a place to sit, by all means don't insist that they must first see the house.

Be of Service

Speaking of drinks, get your party started by getting your guests a drink as soon as possible even if all they'll accept is ice water. Most people slip into the party mood much quicker with a glass in their hand. If you want, you can leave refills up to them, but you should serve the first.

Poor: "Fix yourself a drink."

Fair: "Can I fix you a drink?"

Better: "What can I fix you to drink?"

Best: "May I fix you a ____." (Suggest your specialty.)

If your guests have brought their own libations, queries such as "What can I fix you with this?" or "Do you want this in a frosted mug?" provide a gracious survey of your bar.

Be Interactive

Don't attempt to introduce a fresh face to a group of people all at once. Multiple introductions are always confusing and sometimes intimidating, besides being totally useless. You should make introductions one-to-one with some comment designed to start a conversation. Later you can make another introduction if necessary. Likewise, do not issue name tags. Paper labels are impersonal, impolite, and should be restricted to sales conventions where people are not expected to make a personal effort toward meaningful contacts.

Get people talking by asking provocative questions or bringing up hot topics within a group. This may be artificial at first, but with practice you can have everyone believing that they started the conversation themselves. If you plan games or other organized activities you might use a hint, clue, token, etc., as an item to ponder on and speculate about.

Wait a while before suggesting any physical games or pushing people onto the dance floor. Give people time to adjust to being at a party and get comfortable with each other.

Likewise, wait awhile before initiating any activity that encourages nudity (or stripping down yourself). Even the confirmed jaybirds among your guests probably spent a bit of time and effort selecting their attire for the party and will appreciate a chance to exhibit their good taste.

You might, if safety permits, encourage folks to remove their shoes. Few guests will be threatened or disappointed, and your carpets and furniture will appreciate the gesture. Besides, shoes are notoriously difficult to find when the party is over. A shoe rack near the front door is a considerate touch.

Delegate

It will be difficult to manage all of this for a large party with lots of people coming through the door at once. The only solution is to recruit close friends to assist. Perhaps

the best tasks for subcontracting are tour guide and bartender.

IN THE MOOD

More than once we have heard novices express surprise over the apparent difficulty even experienced swingers have in shifting into a sexual mode. They seem to assume that deciding to participate in swinging somehow eliminates all social ineptness and cultural sex-behavior conditioning. On the contrary, it is a rare party that flows smoothly and effortlessly from verbal to sexual intercourse (or, as one of our friends likes to say, "from vertical to horizontal socializing").

Although we have found no sure cures for the transition blues, we hope that these hints will prove useful.

Get started on the right foot. The closer you are to your destination, the easier your trip. If your party begins with bright lights and formality, the transition to an erotic environment will be both arduous and obvious.

Encourage free movement. If everyone is firmly rooted in an easy chair for any length of time, a disabling inertia may set in. The less mobile the group, the less chance of anyone suggesting a movement to the bedroom. Your home would look rather strange without any chairs, but try to have fewer places to sit than you have guests. Also, serving the food in a separate area than the drinks will encourage meandering.

Discourage large groupings of people. Arrange your furniture, make introductions, and initiate conversations with an eye toward establishing many small groups instead of one large congregation. This will lessen the energy necessary to pull away from a group, and encourage movement around the room.

Change the mood by softening the lighting and/or the music. Drastic measures such as changing from hard rock to violins mid-record or suddenly turning off all the lamps are an obvious and irritating attempt at manipulation. Success demands subtlety.

Ask someone to dance. A clear floor, a dimly lit room, and some slow sultry music should be enough encouragement to get other couples to follow your lead.

Use your facilities or equipment. Bring out the massage oils, suggest a skinny dip in your pool or spa, etc.

Be a leader. The host making the first move is always acceptable and often expected. If you feel that the party is slow getting started, chances are good that there are others who feel likewise. So go ahead and follow your urges. Remember, if the party does not advance beyond cocktails and conversation, your guests will never blame each other, they will always blame you. On the other hand, if the party is small, it may just be that no one is in the mood or feels enough attraction to share more than conversation. That can be okay too.

Don't Push. Always leave an out for those who would rather stand and wait. Wading into the middle of a group and shouting "Why doesn't somebody fuck?" is disconcerting if not crude. Likewise, avoid singling out particular people and urging them to "do something!" Always lead by hints and example, never by direction or coercion.

Furthermore, resist the temptation to choose partners. In a group of more than three couples any lottery, contest, game, or other activity that arbitrarily matches individuals for sexual interaction is in extremely poor taste. Once upon a time, suburban couples choose bedmates for the evening by tossing house keys into a hat — so the story goes. But that just doesn't happen these days, if it ever did. Spontaneous initiation and mutual desire are essential to honorable human sexuality.

GAMES AND CONTESTS

Games are organized activities that involve skill, competition, rewards, and usually some luck. Most of this world's population can be divided easily into those people who love games and those who can't stand games. Very few humans are ambivalent about engaging in structured competition for the hell of it. You should account for this polarization of opinion whenever you plan games. You will probably have a few guests who would prefer watching the 2 a.m. sermonette to playing a game, while others would like their entire evening laid out as a series of competitive or gambling situations.

Although games have "contestants," we use the term "contest" to indicate a competition wherein the winner is determined according to what they have or what they are rather than by how they perform. The most common contests at swinging functions include: "Sexiest Costume," "Funniest Joke," and "Best Buns." Almost

everyone enjoys a contest, if not as a participant, at least as a spectator.

Where and when you hold a contest or suggest a game will depend upon your perception of how the party is developing. Consider instigating some structured play during the early parts of the evening when people have the highest need for, and are most susceptible to, your leadership. The early introduction of games or contests can create an atmosphere of fantasy in which everyday social/sexual inhibitions are more easily lost. Initial games should encourage verbal interaction and, when feasible, encourage the use of first names during the play.

With games, as with anything else at a sex party, avoid any hint of coercion. Nevertheless, in the one area of initial introductions you may be justified in being slightly insistent. The very first communication between strangers is always the most difficult. As the host, you are expected to make the job easier, so don't be reluctant to coax people just a bit.

Some parties naturally develop a break or interlude when most of the guests gravitate to a central location to eat, drink, and generally relax. Perhaps they intend to rest up for another round of sexual activity, or perhaps they have satiated their sexual appetites and seek some other diversion before going home. Games are often welcome during such a recess. The good host will choose an activity that keeps people awake and interested in the party without interfering with those who prefer other pastimes.

Choosing A Game

You may find the following guidelines useful in choosing or altering a game for your purposes.

The Goal: Games can be used to introduce people to each other, to set a particular mood, to increase the amount or intensity of verbal interaction, to get people up and moving around, to get people down and still, or just to provide a pleasant relaxing diversion from the other activities taking place. It is a good idea to know which of these reasons motivate you before you suggest any game.

Games should never be used to direct the sexual activities of participants. Consequently, be very cautious of the manufactured games sold in sex shops and novelty catalogs. Most of them are insulting to the intelligence and demeaning to the spirit.

Timing: No game should be allowed to dominate your party, unless, of course, that's what everybody came for. If a game doesn't naturally end itself in twenty to thirty minutes, impose an artificial time limit. Another approach is to design the game so that it is very easy for the participants to join in and drop out without disrupting or inconveniencing other players.

Requirements: The outcome of any game you choose should hinge upon both skill and luck. Too heavy a reliance on skill turns a game into a serious sport. An overemphasis on luck will make it most difficult to maintain people's interest. Also, a game that requires exceptional knowledge will automatically exclude many potential participants.

The Action: Shun games requiring excessive physical movement. Your guests will probably prefer to save their energy for other pursuits. Games that rely solely on mental gymnastics should also be avoided unless the group needs a sedative.

Competition: General social closeness can be strengthened by choosing games in which participants compete in teams rather than individually.

Gambling: A friendly penny-ante poker game *may* be tolerated for those guests who aren't interested in other activities. However, be extremely careful of any situation in which the exchange of money is involved. Allowing or encouraging games where the outcome could be serious is risking partycide.

Decision Making

It is up to the host to make the choices required to organize a game or contest. Choosing partners and teams, deciding who goes first, establishing the order of participation, and other basic decisions will only remain the simple tasks they are if they are accomplished quickly and fairly. It is important that you exert some leadership and make decisions promptly without showing favoritism. The best method is often to rely upon the chance draw of a card or roll of dice. All this may seem inconsequential to you, but most folks have a keen sense of fair play. If anyone feels even slightly "cheated" your party and your image as a host are bound to suffer.

Judging the winner of contests can be particularly risky. As the host you have the responsibility, so you also have the sole authority. Don't make a simple job into a big hassle by opening yourself up to everyone's opinions

and pressures. Democracy is too divisive and time-consuming. Announce your decision and forget it.

Nevertheless, if only a certain subgroup of guests, such as males or females, are vying for a prize, it may be convenient to have a committee of a few or all of the nonparticipants choose the winner by ballot. No matter how honest and open everyone may claim to be, votes indicating personal opinions about fellow partyers should be cast secretly, so be sure to have paper and pencils handy.

Prizes and Penalties

One way to differentiate your party from the run-of-the-mill get-together is the judicious use of rewards and gifts. If you have a contest or organize games, prizes for the winner(s) and penalties for the loser(s) naturally suggest themselves. When your guests have gone to the trouble of wearing costumes, you should give their effort some recognition by awarding prizes for the best, sexiest, silliest, skimpiest, or whatever seems appropriate. But even if you refrain from organizing the play, you can heighten interest in the general activities by awarding prizes for sexy clothing, costumes, dancing skills, or any other special characteristic or performance. Even a random drawing for a door prize can prove exciting.

Prizes should always be inexpensive relative to the general financial status of you and your guests. Humorous gifts are often best, but a funny item need not be completely useless. Consideration of the following types of prizes should stimulate you to dream up many more of your own.

- Scented Massage Oil
- Vibrator
- Bunch of Batteries
- Bottle of Wine
- Bottle Brush (labeled "condom cleaner")
- Bottle of lubricant
- Pair of Warm Socks
- Three-Minute Timer
- Hand Warmer
- Diary
- Party or dance CD
- Pair of Crotchless Panties
- Bottle of Gatorade
- "Do Not Disturb" Sign
- Contact Magazine

Competitive spirit (and general fun) may be heightened by decreeing penalties for those who lose. Sometimes, people settle for penalties that are embarrassing or degrading. But there is no call to be meanspirited. Better to be constructive. Penalties such as: “Fix everyone a drink.” or “Bring in more wood for the fireplace” will give you a better reputation as a host than insisting that losers sing *99 Bottles of Beer on the Wall*.

THEME PARTIES

Once the novelty has worn off (and it always does sooner than a novice will imagine) people discover that a sex party, like anything else, is only as exciting as each person makes it for himself. Of course, the far greater freedom of action at a swinging bash makes it easier to keep yourself entertained. There will be times, however, when you might appreciate a little outside help. If you find it difficult to distinguish one recent party from another, the time has come to consider organizing a theme party.

A theme party differs from a regular party by its use of a unifying motif that is based upon an idea, institution, or activity not normally associated with swinging. Parties in celebration of an event, such as the anniversary of someone’s birth, an important job promotion, or a national holiday, may or may not be theme parties depending upon how the environs and activities reflect the event celebrated. Thus, a party on the Fourth of July during which swimsuit-clad guests splash in a backyard pool and eat barbeque and watermelon would not be a theme party as we mean the term. Should the host dress as Uncle Sam and hold a singing contest featuring the National Anthem after the guests have painted themselves red, white, and blue, a theme would surely exist. In fact, such a party could just as well be held in mid-November.

Certain basic decisions must be made prior to proclaiming your theme party. First, of course, you must choose a theme that appeals to you. Next, you should decide how much time and effort you are willing to expend. This will determine how thoroughly the theme will permeate the proceedings. Once that is clear in your mind you should consider how much effort you wish to ask of your guests. Other than purchasing a bottle of booze, the most common requirement imposed on attendees is the wearing of costumes. A desire for costumes should be clearly and precisely stated in a written

invitation explaining the theme. (If you do not want costumes or other prior preparation by your guests, you don’t even have to mention the theme in your invitation unless you want to do so.)

Any required dress should be simple and involve little expense. After all, you can’t expect the participants to wear *anything* for very long. Always choose a style of costume that can be sexy, or at least generally flattering. Damn few people want to come to a sex party looking goofy or repulsive. Whatever you do, don’t ask your guests to wear costumes and then not wear one yourself.

Once you make these determinations, it is time to plan your party. The following discussion of themes includes suggestions on food, decor, activities, and costumes. How many items and events you plan is purely a personal matter, within limits. On the one hand, don’t forget the real purpose of the get-together and over organize so that no one has time for private personal interactions. On the other hand, don’t get everyone primed for a theme party and then refrain from even the minimum of giving prizes for costumes. A theme should be justified without dominating the activities.

We are including skeletal concepts for seven theme parties for your consideration. Choose whatever appeals to you, add your own ideas and imagination, and you are well on your way to a super time. The themes discussed first require less preparatory effort than the ones toward the end of the list. No matter which you pick or invent on your own, the extra work involved in having a theme party need not be backbreaking or mind-bending. Thoughtful planning will cause your efforts to pay off handsomely in fun and pleasant memories.

Body Painting Party

Body painting has a long and honorable history — why not disgrace it?

Body painting is one of the best activities for promoting nudity, physical contact, laughter, creativity, competition, and conversation.

EQUIPMENT: Paint, water-based, preferably more than four colors, in at least as many small containers as you have couples. Sticks for stirring. Rags, sponges, and buckets for wiping up. Plastic drop cloths, tarps, or old shower curtains. Polaroid, digital, or video camera if acceptable to your guests.

FACILITIES: The more showers the better. Durable, washable furnishings are recommended.

DECORATIONS: Not really necessary. A few inspiring pictures might help.

COSTUMES: Obviously not.

FOOD: People with paint on their fingers need things they can eat with plastic forks and spoons. Straws may likewise be useful.

ACTIVITIES: Paint member of the opposite sex (chosen by the host or at random) using fingers not brushes. May be done all together or one at a time. (If possible, take photographs to assist in judging.) Award prizes for best, sexiest, most artistic, silliest, etc.

The Healthy Nuts Party

For those who are tired of feeling worse
the next morning.

This theme will concentrate your guests' attention on their physical bodies and their senses. Especially good in warm weather, day or night, indoors or out.

EQUIPMENT: Massage stuff. Any exerciser, weights, or gymnastic apparatus you have or can rent or build. Floor mats. Tape measure and scales.

FACILITIES: Best if you have a sauna, whirlpool bath, or steam bath. A swimming pool helps too.

DECORATIONS: Mr. and Ms. Universe posters on the walls. Exercise charts. Illustrations of body structure and parts. Books and magazines on nutrition, health, and yoga lying around on tables.

COSTUMES: Swimwear and/or towels and/or birthday suits. (Sweat pants are rarely stimulating.)

FOOD: Vegetarian menu, high protein, low cholesterol. Nuts, raw fruits and vegetables, fancy fruit drinks, etc.

ACTIVITIES: Yoga or exercise demonstration; encourage but do not push people to participate. Massage. Maybe a physical game like tug-o-war.

Aphrodisiac Party

With a little help from friendly Mother Nature.

You can do it all yourself or ask each guest to bring a particular item (the more unusual the better). This can be very interesting and informative while keeping the emphasis on lasciviousness. Particularly suited to the rites of spring.

EQUIPMENT: A little incense perhaps, and some eastern music.

FACILITIES: Nothing more than lots of counter or table space.

DECORATIONS: Anything related to herbs, drugs, potions, or sex. Candles are particularly appropriate.

COSTUMES: Informal dress, as sexy as possible.

FOOD: You might not call much of this food, but here is a list of things reputed by somebody or another to increase sexual appetite and/or performance.

Alfalfa Tea
Anise
Artichokes
Asparagus
Basil
Bay Leaf
Beets
Carrot Seeds
Caviar
Celery
Chocolate
Cinnamon
Curry
Eggs
Eucalyptus
Figs
Fish
Garlic
Ginger
Ginseng
Honey (dark)
Kidneys
Liver
Marjoram
Mint Tea
Mushrooms

Nutmeg
Oysters
Pumpkin Seeds
Red Raspberry Leaves
Rosemary
Saffron
Sage
Sarsaparilla
Thyme
Truffles
Vanilla

ACTIVITIES: Testing, trying, guessing, and discussing should be sufficient extracurricular activities.

MEDICAL NOTE: There is often a fine line between herbs and drugs. Dispensing prescription medicines without a license is both illegal and risky, so we must advise against handing out Viagra.

PAJAMA PARTY

Revisit those by-gone Saturday nights when sex was something to whisper and giggle about.

A pajama party is a great way to get everyone involved in the joy of going to bed. Start late, go all night if possible. Pajamas are less conspicuous when hidden under winter coats, but if it's summer everyone can change upon arrival.

EQUIPMENT: Mattresses and/or sleeping bags on the living room floor. Record player adaptable to 45's or CDs of oldies.

FACILITIES: Just a warm house.

DECORATIONS: Romance and girlie magazines scattered about. Old movie (preferably horror) on the television without the sound.

COSTUMES: Those who sleep nude may choose to don a robe, otherwise anything goes from flannel nighties to revealing negligées.

FOOD: Cheeseburgers, potato chips, popcorn, oranges, apples, bananas, bubble gum, etc.

ACTIVITIES: Listen to oldies but goodies. Resurrect the games of your youth. Watch television while surreptitiously petting inside a sleeping bag. True devotees might encourage the women to "do" each other's

hair, but stay away from the nail polish and other stinky chemicals.

PRIMITIVE PARTY

No one can say your parties aren't wild.

Particularly suitable for a warm summer's eve in a secluded outdoor location, the emphasis here is on the physical body and communication by touching.

EQUIPMENT: A small fire outdoors or in your fireplace.

FACILITIES: The fewer the better.

DECORATIONS: If outdoors, none is necessary. If indoors, draw "cave paintings" on brown paper with colored chalk, hang floor to ceiling.

COSTUMES: Loincloths, bearskins, or whatever you imagine a caveperson might wear.

FOOD: Let each guest roast small chunks of meat by skewering them on sticks and holding in flame while squatting near the fire. If steak seems exorbitant, hunks of hot dog will do. Or roast a pig. Any fresh fruits or berries in their natural condition. Drinks in bowls or mugs. Fresh dark breads.

ACTIVITIES: Anything physical but not dangerous. Tug-o-war, races (two or three-legged), relays using old bones, etc. Group massage or bathing. Chanting and storytelling around the fire. Or don't allow talking at all. How about prizes for the most creative grunTERS?

WINTER BEACH PARTY

Guaranteed to satisfy that urge to be different.

In the middle of the snowy months the semi-nudity, heat, and prone positions are great sensual stimulants.

EQUIPMENT: Several heat lamps (the kind that screw into regular sockets), lots of blankets and towels, surf sounds on the stereo. Boombox. Massage oils in suntan lotion bottles.

FACILITIES: A room with lots of floor space.

DECORATIONS: Pictures of the beach, seagulls, etc. A few what's-happening-this-week-at-the-beach publications. Pails and shovels, rafts and innertubes. A beach umbrella over the serving table.

COSTUMES: Swimsuits. The host might dress as a lifeguard, but don't be too obnoxious with the whistle.

FOOD: Soda and beer in cans, water from picnic jug, ice in cooler, hot dogs, pizza slices, soft pretzels, ice cream, saltwater taffy, fudge, or whatever food you associate with the beach. Colorful paper plates, plastic utensils, etc.

ACTIVITIES: Bathing beauty contest-male and female apparel. Lie around in the heat, eat, put "suntan lotion" on each other's exposed flesh and see what develops.

CARNAL CARNIVAL

Turn on to the mystique of the midway.

A good project for a small group of people who enjoy doing goofy things together.

EQUIPMENT: Booths and paraphernalia depending upon activities chosen or invented.

FACILITIES: At least one very large room.

DECORATIONS: Strings of multicolored lights. Circus music. Balloons and crepe-paper streamers. Kewpie dolls, etc.

COSTUMES: Optional for guests. Barkers, dancers, fortune tellers, animal trainers, clowns, etc.

FOOD: Caramel popcorn, candy apples, peanuts in the shell, cotton candy, a decorated cake, hot dogs (hold the onions).

ACTIVITIES: Midway games such as penny pitch, ring toss, and dice roll can be easily improvised. Tell fortunes. Have a booth to "Guess Your Size" (bust and penis). Let your imagination run wild.

GETTING STOPPED

Ordinarily, sex parties tend to peter out by themselves. Sometimes the hosts wish that their party lasted longer and genuinely mean it when they say "Don't go so soon, it's early yet!" Sometimes they really mean "My God, I thought you'd never leave!" If you usually think the party is over before your guests reach the same conclusion you may speed their departure with either the indirect or the direct approach.

The indirect approach may be quite subtle or very obvious. For example, you may suddenly run out of ice, start serving coffee, turn the stereo to an all-news station, or walk through the living room in your pajamas. If you live near an all-night restaurant you might announce that you are going out to get breakfast and invite everyone to join you.

Should your guests fail to catch such hints, the direct approach must be implemented. Simply announce that the party is over and start saying goodnight. There is nothing improper about such a tactic as long as it is used with common sense and caution. The declaration must neither be, nor seem to be, arbitrary. If your guests have any reason to believe that you "kicked everybody out" because you felt rejected, or became jealous, or for any similar personal reason, you may gain a poor reputation very quickly. Any direct exercise of your authority as homeowner must have an obvious and just basis.

If your previous experience suggests that such a problem might arise, it is best to announce the closing time in your invitation or upon your guests' arrival.

Appendix 1

VENTURING ONWARD

Here are a few sources of information, services, and/or advice that you might want to check out.

MAGAZINE

National Connection, also several other, more specialized, magazines from the same publisher.

Web Site: www.connectionmag.com

Mail Address: P.O. Box 603549, Cleveland, Ohio 44103

Order line: 1-800-321-9858

Subscription: \$27.00 per year. Single Issue: \$11.95

Comments: The current king of the standard swinger's mags. Superior (relatively speaking) editorial content. Typical advertisements and personals.

WEB SITES

There are thousands of web sites that claim to cater to swingers in some way. We certainly haven't found the time to look at all of them, but it's pretty definite that most are just trying to sell sexual pictures or devices. Many are useful sources of information, however, and a few have caught our attention as sites that every swinger should peruse at least once. We have established links to these sites and more at our web site:

www.theswinginglife.com

But just in case we have to move, here are the addresses as of early 2001. (Note: Material in quotes is taken directly from the site, other comments are our opinions.)

International Lifestyle Association

<http://www.theila.org>

As far as we know, ILA is the only non-profit association of swinger-oriented businesses and individuals. Their site has the most complete and up-to-date listing of clubs in the USA. The discounts and other benefits available to associates are great, but the real reason to join is to support our lifestyle.

Jeff & Kris' Sex Booth

<http://www.sexbooth.com/main.html>

The best private site we've found yet. Has stories, essays, reviews, and links to their Erotic Guide site,

<http://eroticguide.com/eroticguide.html>

featuring a great section (fully illustrated) on the use of sex toys and a unique section on erotic games.

Harrad 2000 — Bob Rimmer's site.

<http://www.harrad2000.com/index.html>

Lots of fascinating stuff for the swinger who thinks.

Liberated Christians

<http://www.libchrist.com>

"Promoting Positive Intimacy and Sexuality Including Responsible Nonmonogamy or Polyamory as a legitimate CHOICE for Christians and others. Exposing false traditions of sexual repression that have no biblical basis."

Loving More

<http://lovemore.com/>

"We affirm that loving more than one can be a natural expression of health, exuberance, joy, and intimacy. This is a love style we call responsible non-monogamy, or polyamory, and it refers to all forms of multi-partner relating between adults which are ethical and consensual." Quarterly magazine also published.

Appendix 2

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Here is a list of all of the books, articles, and papers we have read that meet one or more of the following criteria:

1. Claim to be about multilateral sexual interactions or an aspect thereof.
2. Appear frequently in other bibliographies of swinging and co-marital sex.
3. Are about sexuality in general and include some significant discussion of swinging or play sex.
4. Are about group interactions in general and include significant discussion of sexuality.

Articles published in swinger's magazines have not been included because there are far too many of them and most are unavailable.

We have tried to avoid articles that consist mainly of letters-to-the-editor and similar compendiums of brief

true-experiences. We welcome any additions or comments from our readers.

A few entries that stand out from the crowd are prefixed with a special symbol.

- (++) Indicates a superior effort that we feel is basically honest, accurate, and instructive.
- (+) Indicates an entry with some redeeming value to the interested reader or especially useful to the researcher.
- (xx) Indicates either misrepresentation, inaccuracy, or stupidity of a high order.
- (&) Indicates entries that are mainly technical and thus of little interest outside the scientific community.

Items without symbols are simply of little usefulness to anyone who doesn't share our goal of reading everything ever written on the subject.

Between the time that we finished writing this version of *Together Sex* and the time it went to press, our research continued and we found a few items worth adding to this list. They are followed by a (+) sign.

Although some books and articles related to co-marital sex or swinging have been published recently, many of the listings here date to the 1970s and are out of print. The magazine articles can usually be found in a good library, but the books can't, so we intended to drop them. We have discovered, however, that the Internet has made the used-book market so easy to access that anyone with a browser stands a fair chance of locating even the most arcane volume somewhere in the world. We've even found several copies of the first version of this book (from 1976) by checking such sources as the Advanced Book Exchange. [www.abebooks.com]

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FICTION

These books entertain as well as instruct and inspire. They very likely have done more for the growth of "alternative lifestyles" than any other factor.

By Robert H. Rimmer

The Rebellion of Yale Marratt, 1964

The Harrad Experiment, 1966

Proposition 31, 1967

Thursday My Love, 1972

... and many others, right up to today.

By Robert A. Heinlein

Stranger in a Strange Land, 1961

The Moon Is a Harsh Mistress, 1966

Friday, 1982

... and many others.

By Henry Sackerman

The Crowded Bed, 1967

By B.F. Skinner

Walden Two, 1948

By Thea Alexander

2150 A.D., 1971

Appendix 3 SPEAKING THE LANGUAGE

"Please remember that the vast majority of human beings are more or less dotty, and that having a sexual anomaly is not necessarily the worst thing in the world."

— Albert Ellis

The Sensuous Person

Every field of human activity generates at least a few words that have a special or unique meaning within its community of practitioners. Being familiar with such jargon can be more than useful if you wish to interact smoothly with people with greater experience in the activity. Swinging is certainly no exception.

At your next sex party, you would likely find few, if any, participants who know all of the terms defined below. But even the most arcane terms do pop up from time to time in magazine and Internet ads. So, in the interest of thoroughness, we have listed some words that aren't really used a lot and included others just because they're rather humorous.

Many of these words have retained the same meaning for several decades. Others change, and new ones are added as the scope of activities broadens or as people of different tastes become involved. If you should come across a term that isn't defined herein, or feel that a different meaning is being ascribed to one that is listed, please let us know.

We have also included a few terms invented by — or exclusively promoted from within — the scientific community. Researchers have been known to spend inordinate amounts of time making up labels for various configurations of people and categorizing the people

themselves under numerous and rather arbitrary headings. They then proudly publish their "findings" in learned journals. Luckily, most of these scholarly publications are bought for status reasons and are rarely read, even by fellow scientists, let alone by the people who are the article's subjects. In contrast, we see each person as an individual whose unique characteristics are not subsumed within the group. So we have refrained from including most of the abstruse names that sociologists and psychologists have dreamed up for the "types" of swingers that they have "discovered."

Also missing from our list are sex-manual definitions of coitus, homosexuality, etc. Anyone who doesn't know the location and function of the clitoris should be reading some other book.

A few terms are described as "buzz words." A buzz word is a term that has meaning only in relation to the user, and really doesn't communicate accurately — if it is understood at all. We urge you to avoid using such buzz words in your communications.

When more than one definition is given, the one indicated by a lower number is preferable to or more common than any with higher numbers.

AC/DC — (The preferred term is "Bi" or "Versatile.")

ADULTERY — This term is hardly swinging jargon, but including it here gives us an opportunity to note that "thou shalt not commit adultery" originally meant only that a man's wife, being his property, was prohibited from enjoying another man sexually. The tribesmen who came up with this idea never intended to prohibit themselves from having all the wives and mistresses they could afford. Although still a legal matter in most locales, adultery is a null concept for independent people.

AMBISEXUAL — (see Bi)

ANIMAL TRAINING (LOVERS) — Bestiality. Sexual interaction with animals, usually dogs (kennel), sometimes horses (stable), or almost anything. Not the sort of thing you'll likely see at parties, but you might run across an ad from someone seeking such alien encounters.

ARTS — [See Culture.]

ATTRACTIVE — A buzz word meaning the way the user likes people to look. Also, the way the user believes him/ herself to look. Which, of course, tells you nothing.

BABY SWINGER — A person who is new to swinging.

BAR [Swinger's] — A restaurant or cocktail lounge that is open on one or more nights a week exclusively for swingers. Overt sexual activities usually are not sanctioned on the premises.

BARBIE & KEN [or Ken & Barbie] — A "sour-grapes" reference used by the excessively overweight to disparage the expectation of pleasing proportions. As in: "I trust you're not looking for Barbie and Ken."

B&D — Bondage and Discipline (or Domination).

BI — A person who enjoys sexual relations with those of the same gender in addition to heterosexual relations. (Versatile)

BIZARRE — (see Way Out)

BONDAGE — 1. The tying, chaining, or otherwise restraining of someone, usually in an uncomfortable if not painful position, in the process of enacting real or pseudo-sadistic/masochistic scenes. 2. (see Restraint)

CAN ENTERTAIN — The advertisers have a home or other place suitable for swinging.

CAN TRAVEL — The advertisers are generally free of any restrictions that might keep them from traveling to your home, or elsewhere, to party.

CANING — (see English Culture)

CLEAN — A buzz word meaning almost nothing except that the users believe themselves to be free of sexually transmitted diseases.

CLOSED SWINGING — Sexual activity between two people that takes place in private (usually behind closed doors) away from other party attendees.

CLOSET SWINGERS — People who hide their swinging proclivities. This would apply to almost all swingers in non-swinging situations and is, therefore, a pretty useless term.

CPL — Couple.

CLUB [Swinger's] — A place temporarily or permanently managed by a group where swingers may meet. Clubs commonly have a bar of some sort and a dance floor, and often offer a spa and/or a swimming pool. An "on-premise" club will have separate rooms with beds, or at least mattresses for sexual play. At an "off-premise" club, no beds are available and sexual contact is more or less restricted.

COLONIC WATER SPORTS — The giving and/or receiving of enemas as a sexual stimulus. Sometimes the liquid is held in the rectum with the aid of a plug while fucking. Note: the term "Water Sports" alone is a reference to urination.

COMARITAL SEX (RELATIONS) — Consensual sex between and among married couples or significant dyads.

CONSENSUAL ADULTERY — Sexual activity on the part of one or both marriage partners that takes place away from the spouse, yet with the knowledge and approval of the spouse.

CORPORATE MARRIAGE — A group marriage (fictional, as far as we know) in which all adult participants own equal shares of stock in a legal corporation set

up to control family assets. For more about this, see Robert Rimmer's novel *Proposition 31*.

CROSSDRESSER — A person who receives erotic stimulation from wearing (and often modeling) clothing usually associated with the opposite sex.

CULTURE — A specific type of activity indicated by prefixing the name of a country or society that is supposedly known for such inclinations, as in "Greek Culture" (anal) or "French Culture" (oral).

CYCLIC MONOGAMY — A relationship in which distinct periods are spent with each of several different spouses in rotation.

DAISY CHAIN — A configuration of four or more people in which each person is orally stimulating the genitals of the person in front of him/her while simultaneously being stimulated orally by the person, if any, behind. If such a line forms a complete circle, the Daisy Chain is "perfect."

DISCIPLINE — Any act demonstrating control of one person over another that involves force or the threat of force and is found sexually stimulating by the participants.

DISCREET — Not likely to do or say anything that might reveal a swinger's identity.

DISCRETION — An indication of the need for caution so that children or others who may open mail or answer the telephone will not be offended or made aware of the swinging activity.

DOCILE — (see Submissive)

D/S — Dominant/Submissive.

DYAD — Two people as a couple.

ENGLISH (CULTURE or ARTS) — Sexual stimulation by spanking or caning the buttocks.

EXPANDED FAMILY — Any form of family that expands the nuclear family through inclusion of people and relationships by selection rather than by blood. As opposed to an "extended" family, which is related by blood or marriage.

EXTRAMARITAL SEX (RELATIONS) — Sexual activity without the participation and often without the approval or knowledge of the spouse.

FISH FRY — A rather tacky and un-politically correct — but humorously inventive — term for a group of women (usually four or more) having same-sex relations while being observed by some or all of their male partners.

FOUNTAIN OF VENUS — Female urination.

FRENCH (CULTURE or ARTS) — Oral-genital stimulation.

FRENCH BATH — A tongue bath.

GENEROUS — A person willing directly or indirectly to pay money for whatever sexual material or interaction is offered.

GERMAN (CULTURE or ARTS) — 1. Erotic acts characterized by the stern disciplining of one partner by the other. 2. S/M.

GOLDEN SHOWER — One or more people urinating upon another.

GREEK (CULTURE or ARTS) — 1. Anal intercourse. 2. Any anal-erotic act.

GROUP MARRIAGE — A group of four or more people in which all participants consider themselves to be married to every other participant.

GROUP SEX — A general term for the various sexual activities that occur as a result of an agreement between three or more people while gathered together. 2. Swinging.

GROWTH SWINGING — (see Utopian)

HARD CORE — If people are called "hard core" they are thought of as: (a) exercising little or no selectivity in choosing sex partners, and/or (b) participating in swinging with an almost religious fervor, as often as circumstances allow, and/or (c) wanting no more emotional or mental involvement than is absolutely necessary to complete the sexual encounter. [Like Bigfoot, "hard core" swingers are often referred to, but no one can show real evidence that they exist. Perhaps they once roamed this continent and are now extinct.]

HEAD JOCKEY — A person who prefers oral-genital contact to genital-genital contact. Sometimes a man is motivated to earn this appellation because he has an exceptionally small penis or exceptional difficulty attaining an erection. A woman who suffers discomfort from vaginal penetration could do likewise. [We always appreciate such creative responses to life's little difficulties.]

HEAVIES — A buzz word meaning anyone the user doesn't like who weighs more than the user weighs.

INTIMATE NETWORK — A group of nuclear families separately domiciled, but joined by a network of comarital relations.

KEN & BARBIE [see BARBIE & KEN]

KING OF HEARTS — A position involving one male who is being kissed on the lips by a female while simultaneously being fellated by another female. The term is based on the head-at-both-ends illustrations on playing cards.

KING OF THE MOUNTAIN — One male being simultaneously stimulated by three or more people.

LEATHER — A reference to the appreciation of the feel and look of leather against the skin. Often, but not always, associated with B/D, restraint, or S/M.

LIGHT — Implies a surface exploration without getting too heavily involved.

LINE MARRIAGE — A group marriage that is open to the addition of younger members selected by the group, thus establishing a continuing family line through selection rather than birth. Described in Robert Heinlein's *The Moon Is A Harsh Mistress*, this arrangement is sometimes spoken of wistfully, but never actually carried out — to our knowledge.

MEET FOR PLEASURE — An indication that the user is interested only in sex; no pretense for social or emotional interaction not directly related to sexual activity. Used chiefly in personal ads and letters in answer to personal ads.¹⁶

MENAGE À TROIS — (pronounced: menazh ah twahh) 1. (See Triad.) 2. (See Threesome.)

MIXED — A biracial partnership.

MODERN MARRIEDS — Sometimes used when advertising in a newspaper or magazine that is not sexually oriented. Indicates a married couple who enjoy some form of sexual interaction with others.

MULTILATERAL SEXUALITY — A broad term covering all sexual activities occurring between non-coupled people with the consent of all involved dyads. Includes swinging, group sex, co-marital sex, consensual adultery, etc. Does not include secret affairs or extramarital sex.

NASCA — The North American Swing Club Association. A group of club and magazine owners and others organized to promote swinging as a viable and beneficial lifestyle, give a national voice to the swinging community, and foster the development of ethical swing clubs.

OLD — A buzz word meaning anyone the user doesn't like who was born before the user.

OPEN MARRIAGE — A fairly general term signifying cooperation between marriage partners without dependence, flexible roles, individual sanctity and growth, privacy, equality, trust, etc.

OPEN SEX (SWINGING) — Sexual activity among two or more people that is open to the view and often the participation of other party attendees.

ORGY — 1. A group of five or more people involved in various combinations of sexual interactions open to the view and participation of everyone. 2. Any party where sexual interactions are sanctioned.

ORGY BUTTER — Any of several lubricants used in sexual activities. [If this term strikes you as unaesthetic, don't even think about "Crease Grease."]

ORIENTAL (CULTURE or ARTS) — The least used and least-well-defined culture. Can mean the insertion into the anus and climactic yanking out of a beaded string. Sometimes used to indicate an interest in Ben Wa Balls, or any other product the user associates with the Orient. A good example of jargon that inhibits communication.

PARTY (Sex or Swinging) — 1. A gathering of three or more couples, in response to an invitation, for the purpose of sexual interactions among them. 2. A euphemism for "fuck", as in "Let's party" or "Did you ever party with them?"

PARTY HOUSE — A multi-roomed building that is designed and operated to aid and encourage sexual activity between guests on the premises. Many exist covertly throughout the country.

PET TRAINING — (see Animal Training)

POLYAMORY — The currently fashionable term for multilateral relationships involving a broader commitment than normally associated with recreational sex. The proponents of polyamory expound a holistic view of multiple relationships, with an emphasis on love and shared responsibilities. In the past, this phenomenon has gone on under various labels, such as group marriage, expanded family, intimate network, and utopian swinging.

P/P — Photo and Phone.

PRETZEL — Any arrangement of four or more people simultaneously involved in mutual sexual stimulation, usually around a central person or couple.

PRIMARY BOND — A dyadic relationship that takes precedence over other relationships.

PROFESSIONAL — 1. A buzz word used to suggest that the user is better educated or higher class than the average advertiser. 2. Someone being paid for their sexual participation.

QUEEN OF HEARTS — King of Hearts with the gender reversed.

QUEEN OF THE MAY — One female being simultaneously stimulated by three or more people.

RECREATIONAL — A subjective term used to indicate an emphasis on the playfulness of social/sexual interaction, as opposed to "utopian." Sometimes used to disparage (as in "merely recreational") by implying a lack of "higher" purpose in swinging.

RESTRAINT — Any restriction of movement — without involving pain — designed to remove a person's physical control over what transpires in a sexual interaction. The subjects of restraint might, for example, be tied down using fur-lined leather cuffs around their wrists; whereas, the subjects of bondage would likely be bound by tight cords cutting into more sensitive body parts. Restraint might be encountered from time to time at your

¹⁶From a list of terms issued by NASCA. We don't advise assuming this precise meaning without further explanation from the user.

“average” swinging party, but bondage is virtually always limited to clubs specializing in S&M/B&D activities.

ROMAN (CULTURE or ARTS) — Sexual orgies. Many people doing many things in the same place at the same time.

RUBBER — A reference to the appreciation of the look or feel of rubber against the skin. Usually associated with B/D. Also, of course, a condom.

SAFE — 1. Used to describe a person who is sterile. Usually a man who has had a vasectomy. 2. (See Clean.)

SAFE SEX — A misnomer usually meant to indicate an insistence on the use of condoms during intercourse.

SAME-SEX — Sexual interactions between two or more people of matching gender. This term describes an activity and does not imply a permanent psychological orientation or lifestyle as do the terms "homosexual" and "bisexual."

SASE — An acronym for Self-Addressed Stamped Envelope. 1. A way to imply popularity. 2. An indication of a monetary motivation for placing the advertisement.

SELECTIVE — A buzz word denoting an assumed characteristic that is used as an excuse when the user doesn't like someone. Also, an ego support for those who are unsure of themselves.

SERIAL MONOGAMY — A succession of monogamous relationships of varying duration terminated by mutual agreement and/or divorce. Also called "sequential monogamy." Usually financially and emotionally disastrous, serial monogamy is a poor alternative to swinging.

SGL — Single.

SLENDER — A buzz word meaning anyone who weighs the same or less than the user weighs.

S/M — Sadism and masochism.

SNOWFLAKE — A symmetrical pretzel. [Isn't that cute?]

SOCIAL — A gathering sponsored by a magazine, business, or organization where people meet to talk, dance, drink and, often, eat. For making contacts only, although socials are usually held in hotels where rooms can be rented for private interactions resulting from the public meeting.

SOCIAL SWING CLUB A membership organization that sponsors swinging and other social activities such as trips and lectures.

SOFT SWINGING — 1. One couple enjoying various sexual interactions with another couple but without exchanging partners for actual penetration. (As with teenage make-out parties, such resolutions not to “go all the way” are often short-lived.) 2. Sometimes used as an antonym of “hard-core,” to indicate that sexual activities are not required.

STD — Sexually Transmitted Disease.

SQUARE — A buzz word indicating a person who is not as liberal as the user.

STRAIGHT — A word with entirely too many meanings. 1. Not versatile or homosexual. 2. A non-swinger. 3. Not sadistic, masochistic, or whatever else the user believes is perverted. 4. A person who does not use drugs, other than alcohol. 5. Square.

STR. — Straight.

SUBMISSIVE — Willing to be the subject of discipline or bondage.

SWALLOW-THE-LEADER — (See Daisy Chain.)

SWAPPING — Two couples exchanging spouses for sexual activities. Although most participants long ago ceased to use the term "wife-swapping" because it implies a male-dominated bartering of wives as possessions, some still use "spouse-swapping" or "mate-swapping." [Such terms still have overtones of ownership and are rarely used. Except in jest ... we recently heard a young woman remark to a girlfriend that she had to watch her weight because "We have to stay swappable, you know."]

SWEDISH (CULTURE or ARTS) — The talented and exclusive use of the hands to erotically stimulate one's partner.

SWINGING — Activities involving consensual and conjoint participation in sexual interactions by a male-female couple with other couples. Single people are sometimes invited to join in the fun, but a single man or woman who claims to enjoy a “swinging lifestyle” is using the term in a different sense entirely.

No one knows for sure how the term “swinging” came to be associated with group sexual interaction, but there are three oft-espoused theories associated with three of the definitions of “swing.”

Theory Number One: “swing ... 1. to sway backward and forward with regular movement ... oscillate.”¹⁷ Thus, “swinging” could be a reference to the constant movement out to a new partner, back to the spouse, out to a new partner, and so on.

Theory Number Two: “swing ... n ... 11. a) jazz music especially in its development after 1935.” The association of the musical term with the lifestyle of its devotees led to the phrase “in the swing” being translated as “part of the beautiful scene.” So today some swingers infer that the term signifies the “beautiful people.” Some sources further speculate that the first folks to use “swing” in this way were youth groups in Germany (“Swing Jungen”) that practiced free love to American pop music ... much to Hitler’s

¹⁷These definitions are quoted from Webster’s New World Dictionary.

dismay. (Nothing bugs a despot more than people having fun.)

Theory Number Three: "swing ... n ... 4. freedom to do as one wishes or is naturally inclined: as, he gave us full *swing* in the matter." From this comes the idea that "swinging" refers to having the freedom to do what comes naturally.

SWITCHING — (See Swapping.) To our knowledge, this is not used to indicate the application of switches.

THREESOME — The simultaneous sexual interaction of three people: one male and two females, or one female and two males.

TICKET — A non-swinging person (usually female) brought to a couples-only swinging activity solely to enable another person (male) to gain entrance. This practice is severely frowned upon.

TRIAD — 1. A grouping of three people, one male and two females, or one female and two males. Usually implies a permanent or semipermanent "marriage," living arrangement, or committed relationship. 2. (see Threesome)

TRIBAL MARRIAGE — A form of pseudo marriage in which all members of a social group theoretically have sexual access to all members (or a large specified subset) of the opposite sex. Tribal Marriage is independent of residence, for example, a motorcycle club.

UTOPIAN — A subjective term designating more or less of an emphasis on, or a desire for, deep commitments, shared responsibilities, and long-term relationships in addition to, or in place of, playful sexual interactions. (See Recreational.)

VERSATILE — A person who enjoys sexual relations with those of the same gender in addition to heterosexual relations. (Bi)

WANNA-BE — Someone who seems attracted to the swinging lifestyle but does not participate, usually because they are too inhibited, or are single, or cannot convince their spouse to play along.

WATER SPORTS — (see Golden Shower)

WAY-OUT — Yet another useless buzz word meaning anyone who indulges in acts that the user doesn't care for. As in "We're not interested in anything way out."

WEALTHY — (See Generous.)