

The Birth of Sexology

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The Birth of Sexology was prepared to commemorate 75 years of Sexology (1908-1983) for the 6th World Congress of Sexology, May 22-27, 1983, Washington, DC. An exhibit was presented at the conference which consisted of 50 display boards, the first of which acknowledged the support of The Kinsey Institute for the project. The exhibit subsequently had a successful run in several countries, including Germany, Denmark, Sweden, and Switzerland, before finding a permanent home in Shanghai, at the Shanghai Sex Sociology Research Center.

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The History and Concept of Sexology (1908-1983)

In our Western civilization attempts at a rational and systematic study of human sexual behavior date back at least to the ancient Greeks. Indeed, physicians like Hippocrates and the philosophers Plato and Aristotle can be claimed as the legitimate forefathers of sex research, since they made extensive observations and offered the first elaborate theories regarding sexual responses and dysfunctions, reproduction and contraception, abortion, sex legislation, and sexual ethics. In imperial Rome, Greek physicians like Soranus and Galen further advanced and systematized ancient sexual knowledge. Their work, in turn, prompted later Islamic scholars to devote a great deal of attention to sexual questions. These studies, originally written in Arabic, were translated and introduced into medieval Europe. Together with re-edited Greek and Roman manuscripts, they became standard texts at newly established medical schools and stimulated a rebirth of anatomical research in the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries. The names of Fallopio (Fallopian tubes), de Graaf (Graafian follicles), Berthelsen

(Bartholin's glands) and Cowper (Cowper's glands) recall, even today, the first flowering of modern anatomy and remain associated with the then newly discovered parts of human sexual anatomy. The Age of Enlightenment ushered in a vigorous and increasingly secularized discussion of sexual ethics and produced the first programs of public and private sex education as well as new classifications and documentations of sexual behavior. In the 19th century, new concerns about overpopulation, sexual psychopathy and degeneracy gave rise to the concept of "sexuality" and led to intensified efforts on many fronts to get a firmer intellectual grasp on a subject matter that rapidly seemed to grow ever more complex. Biological, medical, historical, and anthropological research by von Baer, Darwin, Mendel, Kaan, Morel, Magnan, Charcot, Westphal, Burton, Morgan, Mantegazza, Westermarck, Krafft-Ebing, Schrenck-Notzing, and others, laid the foundations of sex research in the modern, more specific sense. Finally, at the turn of the 20th century, the pioneering work of Havelock Ellis, Sigmund Freud, and Iwan Bloch established the investigation of sexual problems as a legitimate endeavor in its own right.

The concept of a special scientific and scholarly effort devoted to the understanding of sex was first proposed by the Berlin dermatologist Iwan Bloch (1872-1922), who also coined the new term for it: Sexualwissenschaft. The term was first translated as "sexual science," but this is somewhat misleading, since the German Wissenschaft comprises both the natural sciences and the humanities. The translation as "sexology" is therefore preferable, because the Greek root logos, which is part of the word, traditionally refers to all powers of reason and therefore to any rational study, to organized knowledge of any kind. Thus, the Latin-Greek hybrid "sexology" simply refers to the theoretical study of sex, just as the German original. In this sense, Iwan Bloch may be rightfully called the father of sexology (or Sexualwissenschaft).

The modern concept of sexology (i.e. the theoretical study of sex or scientia sexualis) is, of course, to be distinguished from the older concept of erotology (i.e. the practical study of lovemaking or ars amatoria). Erotological writings like Vatsayana's Kama Sutra and other Hindu love manuals, indeed even recent Western counterparts like van de Velde's *Ideal Marriage* or Comfort's *Joy of Sex* want to guide the reader to subjective experiences. They are, in a popular phrase, "how-to books." Sexological writings, in contrast, want to convey objective insight. In this general sense, therefore, the term "sexological" can also be applied retroactively to older Western literature, such as Hippocrates' *On Semen* or Schurig's *Gynaecologia Historica-Medica*.

The purely theoretical study of sex had, several decades before Bloch, entered a new phase of concentration and specialization. 19th-century medicine, elaborating a theme it inherited from the Age of Enlightenment, began to concern itself more and more with the bizarre, dangerous, and supposedly unhealthy aspects of sex. As early as 1843, the Russian physician Heinrich Kaan, in his book *Psychopathia Sexualis*,

offered a classification of sexual mental diseases, a method that was adapted, greatly expanded and refined over forty years later by von Krafft-Ebing in another book of the same title. Indeed, this pre-sexological era of modern sex research was almost exclusively devoted to the study of people believed to be sick. The sexual manifestations of their sickness were carefully listed and, as a rule, ascribed to degeneration.

A broadening of this view could come only from outside medicine and biology as they were then understood. Indeed, as the work of Iwan Bloch demonstrates, it eventually came from two hitherto neglected sources—history and anthropology. Bloch, a man of enormous erudition, who spoke several languages and possessed a personal library of 40,000 volumes, knew from his readings that many supposedly pathological and degenerate sexual behaviors had always existed in many parts of the globe and among both "primitive" and civilized peoples. Therefore, he gradually came to the conclusion that the medical view of sexual behavior was shortsighted and needed to be corrected by historical and anthropological research. He began to see the "sexual psychopathies" as timeless and universal manifestations of the human condition and finally, in the first years of our century, attacked the notion of sexual degeneration in a seminal study.

The Birth and Early Growth of Sexology (1908-1933)

In his monumental study *Das Sexualleben Unserer Zeit* (The Sexual Life of our Time, 1907), Iwan Bloch offered this programmatic statement:

The author of the present work...is...convinced that the purely medical consideration of the sexual life, although it must always constitute the nucleus of sexual science, is yet incapable of doing full justice to the many-sided relationships between the sexual and all the other provinces of human life. To do justice to the whole importance of love in the life of the individual and in that of society, and in relation to the evolution of human civilization, this particular branch of inquiry must be treated in its proper subordination as a part of the general "science of mankind," which is constituted by a union of all other sciences -- of general biology, anthropology and ethnology, philosophy and psychology, the history of literature, and the entire history of civilization.

Having thus mapped out the territory, Bloch proceeded to conquer it. His enormous erudition allowed him to continue:

In so far as so comprehensive a mode of treatment is possible to one individual, the author has endeavored, in his investigation of the sexual life, to do justice to all these widely divergent points of view, in order to facilitate a comprehensive and objective consideration of all the relevant problems... Hitherto there has existed no single

comprehensive treatise on the whole of the sexual life... The time is indeed fully ripe for an attempt to sift... the enormous mass of available material, and to present the result from a centralized standpoint.

This new, centralized standpoint was that of the sexologist, and it soon came to be shared by others.

Bloch's new concept and his new term were eagerly embraced by admiring colleagues, and thus, only one year later in 1908, Magnus Hirschfeld was able to edit the first journal for sexology, the *Zeitschrift Fur Sexualwissenschaft*. With this important publication, sexology was formally launched and quickly developed into a thriving academic endeavor.

The following text recapitulates briefly, in chronological order, some of the early accomplishments:

Journals

Hirschfeld's *Zeitschrift Fur Sexualwissenschaft* was the first journal devoted to sexology as a science. Planned as a monthly publication, it appeared for only one year (1908) in 12 issues and then was incorporated into another, less specialized journal edited by the young Max Marcuse. However, as a historical document, this first attempt remains of enduring interest and is, in fact, a treasure trove of significant insights. Its scope was appropriately wide: The very first issue contained an article by Sigmund Freud on "Hysterical Fantasy and Its Relation to Bisexuality," and subsequent issues presented original work by Adler, Abraham, Stekel and Sadger. Thus, psychoanalysis was clearly announced as a legitimate part of the sexological effort. Yet Hirschfeld's editorial ambition reached further. He traveled to Italy and personally obtained articles from the "grand old men" Mantegazza and Lombroso. The latter's interest in forensic questions was, of course, shared by Hirschfeld himself, who appeared as an expert witness in some of the most sensational "sex trials" of his time. In addition, the journal contained historical, philological, pedagogical, biological, medical, and ethnological articles.

It is important to note in this context that the great Viennese ethnologist Friedrich Salomon Krauss served (together with the Leipzig physician Hermann Rohleder) as a co-editor of the journal and was, in fact, one of the prime movers in broadening the concept of sex research. His many contributions, and especially his journal *Anthropophyteia*, deserve much more attention than they are now receiving in sexological circles.

Eventually, in 1914, on the eve of the First World War, Iwan Bloch and the "Nestor of German sex research," Albert Eulenburg, made the second attempt at a purely

scientific journal and once more started the *Zeitschrift Fur Sexualwissenschaft* as the official organ of the newly founded "Medical Society for Sexology and Eugenics" in Berlin. As they state in their preface, it intends to serve "the study of medical, natural, and cultural problems of sexology." After Eulenburg's and Bloch's death, this journal was also edited by Max Marcuse and survived until 1932. In the following year, Marcuse escaped to Palestine and later died as an Israeli citizen.

The historical importance of this great journal can hardly be exaggerated. For nearly two decades it collected and published the sexological work of the best minds of its time.

Societies

The *Arztliche Gesellschaft fur Sexualwissenschaft und Eugenik* (Medical Society for Sexology and Eugenics) was founded in Berlin on February 21, 1913 by Bloch, Hirschfeld and several other interested physicians. It was the first sexological society and, through its above-mentioned journal, it soon exercised a considerable national and international influence. Beginning with 15 founding members, the membership increased to over 100 within the first year. Also open to non-medical members with academic credentials, the society held monthly meetings, usually of more than 2 hours, in which papers were presented and discussed. Sigmund Freud, in Vienna, dismissed the society as a forum created especially for the mistaken ideas of Wilhelm Fliess, but this was a hasty and erroneous judgment. Although it is true that Fliess was an active participant, the personalities of the other members were much too strong to be dominated by a single view.

It is also remarkable that, only a few months after the first, a second sexological society was founded in Berlin, the *Internationale Gesellschaft fur Sexforschung* (International Society for Sex Research). This rival organization, under the leadership of Albert Moll, eventually developed into an influential force of its own. It held international congresses and, ironically, also took over the *Zeitschrift fur Sexualwissenschaft* under the editorship of Max Marcuse.

Books

It is impossible, in the present context, to give an adequate account of the rich early sexological literature. It was, of course, deeply rooted in the 19th century, which had already produced a sizeable number of seminal works.

However, even considering only the first third of our century before the rise of Hitler, there are so many great, if unjustly forgotten sexological books, that only the sketchiest outline can be given here.

The most important authors were once again Bloch, Moll, Hirschfeld, and Max Marcuse. Of these, Iwan Bloch, the actual "father of sexology," is perhaps still the least understood. In addition to his medical, historical, and ethnological studies and his earlier mentioned *Sexual Life of Our Time* (1907), Bloch also made the first great attempt at a comprehensive sexological standard work. He planned a series of monographs, written by different authors, which would cover the entire field. This ambitious project under the title *Handbuch der Gesamten Sexualwissenschaft in Einzeldarstellungen* (Comprehensive Handbook of Sexology in Monographs) remained fragmentary because of the intervening first World War and Bloch's untimely death. Nevertheless, three volumes appeared: Bloch's own *Die Prostitution* (Prostitution), 2 vols., 1912 and 1925, and Hirschfeld's *Die Homosexualität des Mannes und des Weibes* (Homosexuality of Man and Woman), 1914. The latter study, based on personal knowledge of over 10,000 individuals, was rightly hailed as the most thorough work on the subject, an "encyclopedia of homosexuality," whose historical introduction alone is still unsurpassed in depth and, even today, would more than justify a translation.

However, it is Bloch's uncompleted and untranslated work which deserves the greatest attention. He considered prostitution the central problem of sexology, since it combined the biological and cultural aspects of sex in the most dramatic and obvious fashion. If ever an author was meant to do this subject justice, it was Bloch. In his hands, Wilhelm von Humboldt's abandoned plan to write a *History of Whoring* (1778) as a *History of Human Dependency* would have succeeded, and thus, his inability to finish the work was a tragedy for our field. We now can only admire the outline and the amazing scholarship of the completed part of his historical introduction. Nothing comparable has ever been attempted again.

Albert Moll had, before the turn of the century, already written the first great monographs on homosexuality (*Die Conträre Sexualempfindung*, 1891) and the nature of the sexual urge (*Untersuchungen Über Die Libido Sexualis*, 1897). The latter book had a great and not fully acknowledged influence on Freud, especially since it took infantile sexuality for granted. Indeed, in 1909, Moll wrote the first comprehensive study devoted to "the sexual life of the child," *Das Sexualleben Des Kindes*. Finally, in 1911, he edited the first single sexological handbook *Handbuch Der Sexualwissenschaften*. This work was enlarged and updated in 1926. The two impressive, richly illustrated, yet untranslated volumes of this edition represent a milestone in sex research. Even by themselves, they were capable of giving it academic legitimacy. Another remarkable achievement was the *Handwörterbuch Der Sexualwissenschaft* (Hand Dictionary of Sexology), 1923, edited by Max Marcuse. It contained lengthy articles by recognized authors on all aspects of sexology. The entries dealing with psychoanalytic concepts were written by Sigmund Freud himself, who thus formally re-established some links with the sexology movement.

However, the most fertile sexological writer was Magnus Hirschfeld. Even before his great study of homosexuality, he had already written a classic work on transvestism, a term he himself had coined (*Die Transvestiten*, 1910). Yet his position as the foremost sexologist was secured by the two major works of his later years: a textbook in three volumes, *Sexualpathologie* (*Sexual Pathology*), 1916-20, and his sexological testament, the sum of 30 years of research and experience, a heavy, large-size standard work in five volumes called *Geschlechtskunde* (*Sexual Knowledge*), 1926-30.

Films

Another area of sexological activity that deserves to be recalled is the production of films. Iwan Bloch, even before the end of the first World War, served as an advisor for a dramatic film about the problem of syphilis: *Es Werde Licht* (*Let There be Light*), 1916-18. This film was also supported by the Medical Society for Sexology and eventually grew into a project of several parts. Its director was Richard Oswald, later also successful with non-sexological films in Berlin and Hollywood. Oswald further made several films in close collaboration with Magnus Hirschfeld, of which the best known is perhaps *Anders Als Die Andern* (*Different from the Others*), 1919, a plea for the decriminalization of homosexual behavior. In this film, Conrad Veidt, who later played the Nazi officer in *Casablanca* with Humphrey Bogart, appears as a homosexual violinist who is blackmailed and commits suicide. It was the first popular film ever to deal with homosexuality, and at least parts of it are preserved in various film archives.

How many of the other films made with Hirschfeld are still in existence is unclear. Hirschfeld himself mentions five films in his last list of publications.

Another important contribution was the Steinach film (1923), produced with Austrian support by the Berlin film company Ufa. In documentary fashion, it introduced a wider public to the endocrinological studies of Eugen Steinach. This full-length sexological film was also briefly shown in New York before the Medical Society, but did not find an American distributor.

Institutes

In 1919, Hirschfeld was able to realize his greatest ambition and to found the world's first Institute for Sexology. It was housed in one of Berlin's finest buildings (a former residence of Prince Hatzfeld, the German ambassador to France), set up as a foundation, turned over and accepted by the government. This institute became the center of considerable research and therapeutic activity and soon gained recognition worldwide.

Reflecting the interdisciplinary approach of its founder, the institute was devoted to four major areas of research: sexual biology, sexual pathology (medicine), sexual sociology, and sexual ethnology. Its library housed over 20,000 volumes, 35,000 photographs, large numbers of objects and works of art. In addition, approximately 40,000 confessions and biographical letters were on file. The staff consisted of Hirschfeld himself, an archivist, a librarian, four secretaries, and various assistants. Among the institute's many activities, three are especially noteworthy: (a) a large premarital counseling practice, the first of its kind in Germany, (b) regular public lectures and discussions on sexological topics, and (c) a medico-legal service for expert testimony, especially in criminal cases. In all of these areas, Hirschfeld also trained young scholars and scientists, such as the gynecologist Ludwig Levy-Lenz and Josef Hynie, later professor of sexology in Prague. Moreover, the institute had visitors from many countries, from Margaret Sanger and Harry Benjamin to Jawaharlal Nehru, Andre Gide and the young Christopher Isherwood. In short, it was an important cultural asset not only for the city of Berlin but also for the whole country and, indeed, the world.

However, on May 6, 1933, a little more than 3 months after Hitler had come to power, the institute was ransacked by a Nazi mob and its books and papers publicly burned. This surprisingly early attack on sexology has led to speculation as to its motives. The anti-Semitic impulse was, of course, obvious, but Levy-Lenz, who had been on the staff at the time, later ascribed the official vandalism to the fact that many prominent Nazis had been patients and that the institute "knew too much" about the party leadership.

Congresses

Finally, we may remember with pride another great legacy of the early sexology movement -- international scientific congresses. Here again, Hirschfeld was the pioneer. In 1921, two years after the opening of his institute, he organized the first sexological congress in history, the International Meeting for Sexual Reform on a Sexological Basis in Berlin. It was one of the first international congresses of any kind in Germany after the Great War, and the tireless Hirschfeld had managed to assemble an organizing committee of scientists from Tokyo and Peking to Moscow, Copenhagen, London, Rome and, indeed, San Francisco (Dr. Victor G. Vecki).

The six-day congress presented 38 papers in four major areas: (a) Sexual Endocrinology, (b) Sex and the Law, (c) Birth Control, and (d) Sex Education. It ended with a call for legal and social reform, a goal that was widely supported, but which also evoked much academic criticism. Albert Moll, for example, Hirschfeld's fellow sexologist and rival, condemned the congress as mere "propaganda" and, five years later, organized the first, "purely scientific" International Congress for Sex Research also in Berlin (1926). It covered roughly the same areas as Hirschfeld's

earlier congress, but offered nearly three times as many speakers. Among these, were Harry Benjamin, Eugen Steinach, Norman Haire and Bronislaw Malinowski. This was followed by a second and last congress in London in 1930, which was otherwise less distinguished, although it did feature Ernest Jones with a paper on psychoanalysis.

Hirschfeld, who was more energetic than Moll, succeeded in organizing four more international congresses in Copenhagen (1928), London (1929), Vienna (1930), and Brno (1932). The Copenhagen congress led to the founding of the World League for Sexual Reform, with Hirschfeld, Auguste Forel, and Havelock Ellis as the first presidents. This organization sponsored the next congresses, and among its speakers were some of the most impressive personalities of the time: J. H. Leunbach, Norman Haire, Max Hodann, Kurt Hiller, Helene Stocker, Vera Brittain, Marie Stopes, Ernst Grafenberg, Harry Benjamin, Elise Ottesenlensen, Bertrand Russell, George Bernard Shaw, Ernst Toller, Wilhelm Reich, Friedrich S. Krauss, and Benjamin B. Lindsey. Curiously enough, once the Nazis had seized control, even countries other than Germany became less hospitable to the open discussion of sexual reform. No more congresses could be held, and thus, after Hirschfeld's death, the league dissolved.

We have, in this summary, deliberately passed over all psychoanalytic contributions, since Freud and his followers have fortunately found and retained the academic and popular recognition they deserve. To a lesser extent, this is also true of Wilhelm Reich, whose work is now, at least in part, again being appreciated. Thus, their place in history seems secure. We hope to have shown, however, that in the first third of our century, there was far more to the study of sex than psychoanalysis, and that, as far as sexology proper is concerned, Freud was only a marginal figure.

Unfortunately, this brief tribute does not permit a closer examination of these issues. Let us, however, emphasize as strongly as possible that to honor the memory of our unjustly forgotten pioneers is more than an overdue act of piety or intellectual restitution. It is, in fact, an indispensable first step in raising our own consciousness. If we do not regain our past that has been stolen from us, we sexologists will not have the academic future to which we are otherwise well entitled.

And let it be understood that the rediscovery of our roots also involves a new understanding of the whole scientific, cultural, social, and political context in which they are embedded. After all, the Vienna of Friedrich S. Krauss, Sigmund Freud, Eugen Steinach, and Wilhelm Reich was also the Vienna of Mahler, Schonberg, Klimt, Schiele, Loos, Weininger, Wittgenstein, Schnitzler, Hofmannsthal, Karl Kraus, and the young, unemployed Adolf Hitler.

Berlin, in Hirschfeld's lifetime, changed from a quiet, almost rural Prussian town into the large German capital and hectic metropolis. He, as well as Eulenburg, Bloch,

Moll, and Max Marcuse lived through the most extraordinary scientific upheavals, technological innovations, cultural breakthroughs, social upheavals and political changes. Berlin was the city of Bismarck and Bebel, Rosa Luxemburg and Walter Rathenau, Fontane and Doblin, Menzel and Liebermann, Zille and Grosz, Max Reinhardt, Brecht, Weill, and Piscator, the great film companies and the small cabarets; it was Kaiser Wilhelm's imperial residence and the heart of "Weimar culture." All of this had its impact on our pioneers. It constituted the climate in which sexology was conceived and could grow.

Sexology Since World War II

After the Second World War, sexology experienced a renaissance in America through the efforts of Alfred C. Kinsey. His training and experience as a zoologist made him well suited for the task of taking a large-scale, strictly empirical survey of actual sexual behavior in the United States. With their two monumental studies, the so-called Kinsey Reports (Sexual Behavior in the Human Male, 1948, and Sexual Behavior in the Human Female, 1953), Kinsey and his co-authors made a new, significant, and non-medical contribution to sex research. Moreover, it could honestly be called sexological in the sense demanded by Bloch, because it was the result of interdisciplinary teamwork. As Kinsey himself made clear in the "Historical Introduction" to the first volume:

Throughout the nine years of study many hours have been spent in consultation with specialists outside this staff, particularly in the following fields: Anatomy, animal behavior, anthropology, astronomy (statistical), biology, child development, criminal law, endocrinology, general physiology, genetics, gynecology, human physiology, institutional management, law enforcement, marriage counseling, medicine (various branches), military authorities, neurology, obstetrics, penology, psychiatry, psychoanalysis, psychology (general), psychology (clinical), psychology (experimental), public health, public opinion polls, sex education, social work, sociology, statistics, urology, venereal disease.

Kinsey further explained that he did not expect future sex research to remain restricted to this preliminary list. He therefore offered a broad outline of a basic sexological library, which, in his opinion, had to cover at least all of the following fields:

Biology, psychology, sociology, anthropology, medicine, marriage counseling, child development, personnel programs, public opinion surveying, radio programs, philosophy, ethics, religion, education, history, law, law enforcement, literature, arts, and erotica.

As one can see, Kinsey's interests ranged wide, and indeed he succeeded in amassing a substantial library and collection along the lines he had indicated. Unfortunately, with his untimely death in 1956, and with the loss of previous financial support, his ambitious research programs for the future had to be curtailed drastically. Since then, The Kinsey Institute, under the directorship of Paul H. Gebhard (1956-1982) continued its work on a reduced scale. Recently (1982), the directorship has been taken over by June M. Reinisch.

In the last few decades scientific attention has again shifted to medical and physiological studies. Mainly under the impact of two other pathbreaking books, *Human Sexual Response* (1966) and *Human Sexual Inadequacy* (1970) by William H. Masters and Virginia Johnson, researchers have concentrated on treating the sexual dysfunctions of the individual (or at most, the couple). As a result, the social and historical dimensions of sex have largely been neglected.

Thus, in the public mind, sexology is today often associated with "sex therapy," a medical, paramedical, or quasi-medical enterprise. This perception is, of course, wrong about both sexology in general and sex therapy in particular. After all, the latter is, to a large extent, no longer based on a medical model, but rather on various learning models of human behavior. Consequently, many sex therapists are not members of the medical profession, and the people they treat are no longer called patients, but clients. Nevertheless, there are still strong tendencies on the part of many therapists and researchers to borrow respectability from the medical establishment and to reintegrate sexology into medical schools as a specialty for physicians.

However, its own historical development tells us that sexology, properly understood, cannot grow on this narrow basis. The exploration and manipulation of physical and psychological responses is, at best, a sexological side issue. The holy aura of "therapy" should not blind us to the dangers of uncritical, ahistorical specialization. Indeed, we must realize that the academic dominance of a purely medical sexology would be a throwback to Victorian times, in spite of its increased technological sophistication. We deceive ourselves if we expect significant progress in understanding human sexuality by putting our faith in the mindless collection of more "data" or in the refinement of therapeutic techniques. Rather, the study of sex must first gain a critical consciousness of its own origin and historical role. After all, "human sexuality" or "sexual behavior" and similar constructs which now figure as the "objects" of sexology, are not concrete, finite, and clear-cut entities that can be touched, weighed, or measured. Instead, they are concepts which were developed in the course of a continuing larger historical process. All the key words, phrases, expressions, and concepts of modern sexology were unknown to the classical writers of the past. "Sexuality," "homosexuality," "sexual behavior," "sex drive," "sexual response," "sexual dysfunction," -- none of these terms can be found in the Bible, in

Homer, Aristotle, Dante, Shakespeare, Voltaire, or Goethe. Neither would the American Founding Fathers have understood them. Indeed, even today the exact meaning of these concepts remains unclear to the extent that their historical origin remains unexamined. This becomes immediately obvious when one looks for their definition in dictionaries, encyclopedias, or professional textbooks. The current definitions are either tautological or carry a whole system of unquestioned, but unwarranted assumptions. These assumptions, in turn, can be understood only on the basis of a historical analysis. In short, the study of sex is, above all, a study of ideas, and, as it turns out, very often the study of foolish ideas. Sexology is therefore mainly Ideologiekritik, or the critical examination of ideologies.

Fortunately, there are some counterforces which try to rectify the present sexological imbalance, and which seek to reconnect sexology with its long and honorable lost tradition.

An important and meaningful link to the past has been the reconvening of World Congresses of Sexology in Paris (1974), Montreal (1976), Rome (1978), Mexico City (1979), Jerusalem (1981), and Washington (1983). These congresses have, once again, taken up the work originally started by Hirschfeld and Moll.

Furthermore, several European universities (Prague, Hamburg, Frankfurt, and Leuven [Belgium]) now have departments of sexology, and in the United States there are a number of undergraduate and graduate Human Sexuality Programs. In San Francisco, a sexological graduate school, The Institute for Advanced Study of Human Sexuality, even awards academic degrees specifically in sexology.

Still, the goal envisioned by Ellis, Freud, Bloch, Hirschfeld, Moll, Marcuse and other sexological pioneers has not nearly been approached, much less reached everywhere. As sex research advances, the variety of goals and methods in a multitude of disciplines itself creates a problem of correlation and evaluation. The loss of perspective is therefore a constant threat. In other words, Bloch's sexological "centralized standpoint" is more important than ever.

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