



Introduction:

# Shocked

**H**AVE YOU EVER CROSSED PATHS with someone momentarily, exchanged a few words, and then discovered you can't forget their face, or something they said? That's what I'm going through now. Several months ago, I gave a talk about sexual health to college students, and a girl in the audience made an astonishing comment. Her words, and her eyes, haunt me to this day.

I'd been invited to speak at a small private college outside Philadelphia. The auditorium was filled to capacity, with students sitting in the aisles and leaning against the walls. It was a lively crowd, but when I stepped up to the podium it fell silent.

They knew I wasn't there with another "safer sex" talk. Why fly me in from across the country to tell them things they can recite in their sleep? They invited me because I'm the doctor bringing the science they'd never heard. The biochemistry of trust and attachment. How ovulation is affected by a man's scent. Why a young cervix is easily infected. They'd learn that evening that with or without protection,

sex is a serious matter—especially for girls. That a single encounter can have profound, life-long consequences.

I was there to teach the biology that was omitted from their “safer sex” training. It was a no-nonsense, politically incorrect approach to a subject close to their hearts, and they hung on to each word from start to finish.

Afterwards I asked for questions, and a number of hands shot up.

“What about the HPV vaccine?”

“There’s reason to hope it will prevent a great deal of disease,” I said, “but it’s not a cure-all. Girls,” I told them, “you should be vaccinated even if you’ve already been sexually active.”

Next came a complaint:

“You assume everyone is heterosexual. You should be less heteronormative.”

This was not the right time for a discussion about the politically correct notion of “heteronormality,” so I just thanked the student for his comment and added that the highest rates of sexually transmitted infections are found in gay men and bisexuals, and the lowest in lesbians.<sup>1</sup>

Then a dark-haired girl in the front row raised her hand.

“I’m a perfect example of what you talked about. I always used condoms, but I got HPV anyway, and it’s one of the high-risk types. I had an abnormal Pap test, and next week I’m going to have a culposcopy.”

She sounded mellow, but there was panic in her eyes.

I felt a wave of sorrow. This young woman was going in for a biopsy of her cervix because atypical cells were present—a result of infection with a high risk strain of HPV. I knew what that meant: she probably had HPV-16, the type that’s most difficult for her body to clear,<sup>2</sup> and most likely to cause malignancy. If the infection persisted, her risk of developing cervical cancer was at least 40 percent.<sup>3</sup>

“But I thought it over,” she continued, “and I decided that the pleasure I had with my partners was worth it.”

The audience was silent. How does one react to such a declaration? With applause? High fives?

“I hope all goes well next week,” I said, “and that you’ll never have to worry about this again.”

But I knew it wasn’t so simple. In a few days she’ll lie on a table with her feet in stirrups, a large electronic microscopic inches from her vagina. With a bright light illuminating the site, the gynecologist will examine her cervix. He’ll say something like “this might be uncomfortable,” then excise abnormal areas with a scalpel. It will hurt. She might have pain and discharge afterwards. Then she’ll wait for a call with the results: is she okay, or not?

The way I saw it, her story was a double catastrophe. For a young woman—she couldn’t have been over 20—to even *worry* about having cancer was the first catastrophe. At this time in her life, she shouldn’t be concerned about anything more serious than finals.

The second catastrophe was her sentiment: “The pleasure I had was worth it.”

*Worth it?* What’s she talking about?

Didn’t she have the concerns I always hear: *When was I infected, last week or last year?* and *Who was it, Kenny or Ron?* *Should I tell my current partner, or my future ones?* *What about Mom and Dad?* *What does dysplasia mean, anyhow?* *Could I really get . . . cancer?*

Was this young woman aware, I wondered, of all the possible ramifications? While it’s true that most HPV seems to clear, she’ll never know—is the virus gone, or just dormant? Had anyone told her that having one sexually transmitted disease (STD) makes her more vulnerable to others, including HIV? That being on the pill could increase her risk, and that pregnancy can re-activate the virus?

All this, yet “the pleasure was worth it”?

I guess she felt that sex trumps everything, even health. It was all about pleasure, even if it ends in disease. Where did this thinking come from?

## Back to the Source

According to a 2008 report from the federal Centers for Disease Control, she has plenty of company: one in four adolescent girls in the United States has a sexually transmitted infection.<sup>4</sup> When that fact hit the news, parents were horrified, health experts were shocked, and the CDC called it “a wake-up call.”<sup>5</sup>

A statement was issued by the president of the Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States (SIECUS). The figures, it said, were “staggering” and “disturbing”; they represented an “inexcusable failure.”<sup>6</sup>

Their reaction reminded me of a scene in the classic film *Casablanca*. You know, that famous line in which Captain Renault tells Rick he is “shocked—*shocked!*—to find that gambling is going on in here,” and then quietly collects his winnings.

**One in two sexually active youth will contract an STD by age 25.<sup>29</sup>**

That 3.2<sup>7</sup> million American girls have a sexually transmitted infection should come as no shock, especially to SIECUS and its main cohorts, Advocates For Youth (AFY) and Planned Parenthood. This pandemic is a direct consequence of their vision and ideals.

These groups claim to provide “comprehensive access” to “accurate” sex education. Take a look, though, at their curricula, their guides for teachers and parents, and—most disturbing—the websites to which they direct your kids: you’ll see how young people are infused with a grotesque exaggeration of the place of sexuality. Promiscuity, experimentation, and fringe behaviors are encouraged. For them, these are personal choices, and judgments are prohibited. At all ages, sexual freedom is a “right,” an issue of social justice. In short, they are dedicated to promoting radical social ideologies, not preventing disease.

That one in four teens has a sexually transmitted infection (STI) is deeply troubling, yes, but it shouldn’t come as a surprise. What’s

**Sex education is comprised of a vast network of programs with Planned Parenthood, Advocates for Youth, and SIECUS at its center. Consequently, every parent should check their child's school curricula for the full picture.**

astonishing is the madness called “sexuality education.” Until these programs are recognized as irresponsible and dishonest, young people, especially girls, will continue to pay an awful price.

Madness is a strong word, but the more I learn *what* our children are taught, and *when*, the more I stand by that choice.

Parents, have you heard what our kids are told? Have you seen what's put in front of them? I thought it was *illegal* to make indecent material available to minors. You think MTV is vulgar? I suggest you explore the material sex educators have created for kids.

Take a look at Planned Parenthood's revolting “Take Care Down There,” and “How Babies are Made.”<sup>8</sup> Check out gURL.com, a site recommended to teens by SIECUS, Planned Parenthood, and similar groups that claims to be “the largest community of teenage girls on the web.” Their “experts” want your daughter to know about sado-masochism—“being tortured, bound, tickled or having hot wax poured on the body.” “Though it may seem painful,” your daughter will learn, “those involved find the pleasure outweighs the pain.”<sup>9</sup> gURL.com's best selling book for teens, *Deal With It!*, lauded as “a superb reference for young women” by a former president of Planned Parenthood, provides your daughter with instructions on “giving a blow job,” “going down on a girl,” and features stick figure illustrations of “the three most popular positions” for intercourse.<sup>10</sup> Are you troubled by your teen's language? I direct you to [www.positive.org](http://www.positive.org), recommended by both SIECUS and AFY. You'll be horrified. This offensive material is foisted on our kids under the pretence of safeguarding their health and well-being.

When I think of someone exposing my kids to this smut, my eyes narrow and the claws come out. I see red. But what of the many young people who've been raised on this stuff? What effect has it had on their attitudes and behavior? As a physician and a mother, I weep for them.

### **Hicks vs. Harvard**

Objections to today's sex education are hardly new. Some parents have been active in their opposition, taking legal action, even going to jail.<sup>11</sup> But organizations such as SIECUS and Planned Parenthood claim neutrality and successfully portray the conflict as religious right versus medical facts, hicks versus Harvard.

Those hicks must be on to something, because recent discoveries in neurobiology, endocrinology, and histology indicate science is in *their* corner. I contend that it's "comprehensive sexuality education" that's animated by pseudoscience and crackpot ideology. Sexuality educators charge their opposition with censoring medically accurate, up to date science, and argue that kids need more than a "plumbing lesson." Yet the sex ed industry is no less guilty of using science selectively and omitting facts that contradict their agendas. It's time to call foul.

SIECUS and Planned Parenthood have yet to recognize some of the most compelling research of recent years. These organizations are still animated by the philosophies of the infamous sexologist Alfred Kinsey—whose work has been debunked—the birth control and eugenics advocate Margaret Sanger, the feminist Gloria Steinem, and *Playboy* founder Hugh Hefner. These twentieth-century crusaders were passionate about social change, not health. Their goal was a cultural revolution, not the eradication of disease. And the same is true for the sex ed industry. That's why their premises haven't changed in fifty years, even as journals like *Neuropsychiatry* and *The New England Journal of Medicine* have filled with research contradicting them.

## **Bizarro World**

While SIECUS informs kids that culture teaches what it means to be a man or a woman, neuroscientists identify distinct “male brains” or “female brains” while a child is still in the womb. According to the “experts,” a girl is a “young woman,” ready for “sex play,” but gynecologists know the question is not *whether* a sexually active “young woman” will get herpes, HPV, or Chlamydia, it’s *which one*. “Respect your teens’ decisions,” parents are advised; “step aside, and don’t judge.” But studies show kids do best when parents convey their expectations and stand firm. Give adolescents information, they promise, provide them with condoms and pills, and they’ll make smart decisions. But MRIs show that during highly charged moments, teen brains rely on gut feelings, not reason. In other words, it’s not ignorance causing all those pregnancies and infections; it’s the unfinished wiring between brain cells.

These findings, and more, are excluded from modern sex education. Why? Because they contradict Kinsey, Hefner, and Steinem. They testify against the anything goes, women-are-just-like-men ideology. They announce to the world: Hicks – 1, Harvard – 0.

## **What Sex Ed Is Really All About**

Parents, if you believe that the goals of sexuality education are to prevent pregnancy and disease, you are being hoodwinked. You must understand that these curricula are rooted in an ideology that you probably don’t share. This ideology values, above all—health, science, or parental authority—sexual freedom.

According to this philosophy, a successful curriculum encourages students to develop their own values, not blindly accept those of their community. It emphasizes the wisdom they’ll gain through open-mindedness and tolerance. “Students . . . become more ‘wide awake’ and open to multiple perspectives that make the familiar strange and the strange familiar,” according to one sex education manual.<sup>12</sup>

If the subject is marine biology or entomology, you might not mind if the “strange” becomes the “familiar” to your child. But when it comes to issues of sexuality, it might be another matter entirely. Do you want instructors, whose personal values might be at odds with yours, to encourage your kids to question what they’ve been taught at home and at church,<sup>13</sup> and to come up with their own worldview based on taking sexual risks that endanger their health and wellbeing? It seems reasonable to question the ethics of this practice.

What these “experts” are hiding is their goal of bringing about radical social change, one child at a time. Their mission is to mold each student into what is considered “a sexually healthy” adult—as if there was universal agreement on what that is.<sup>14</sup> From a review of many of today’s sex ed curricula and websites, it would appear that a “sexually healthy” individual is one who has been “desensitized,” who is without any sense of embarrassment or shame (what some might consider “modesty”), whose sexuality is always “positive” and “open,” who respects and accepts “diverse” lifestyles, and who practices “safer sex” with every “partner.”

This is not about health, folks. This is about indoctrination.

## **The Madness of “Comprehensive Sex Ed”**

*Don’t wait until children ask questions*, parents are told by sex education “experts”; to ensure their healthy future, they need information early. Teach preschoolers that each of us is sexual, from cradle to grave, and that “sexual expression” is one of our basic human needs, like food, water, and shelter. Encourage their “positive body concept,” by expanding games such as “Simon Says” to include private parts (*Simon says point to your ear, ankle, penis*).<sup>15</sup> Explain intercourse to preschoolers<sup>16</sup>; tell them they have “body parts that feel good when touched.”<sup>17</sup> Inform five-year-olds that “everyone has sexual thoughts and fantasies”



and that “people experience sexual pleasure in a number of different ways.”<sup>18</sup> Teach kids about HIV before they know their ABCs.<sup>19</sup>

The potential for harm is even greater a few years later when our kids must learn more, we’re told, for their own good. Planned Parenthood says 3rd grade is the time to find out about wet dreams, masturbation, rape, and “sex work.”<sup>20</sup> Nine- to twelve-year-olds should understand that male and female are not defined solely by chromosomes or genitalia; everyone has an “internal sense” of his or her identity, and that “sense” might not jibe with what they see in the mirror.

As you can imagine, sex educators believe that the “information” teens “need” to know is more explicit and disturbing. But by then, of course, if not earlier, they can go online themselves and check out the sites sexuality educators recommend, like Columbia University’s “Go Ask Alice.” I urge every adult whose life includes a young person to check out this award-winning site, one that gets over two thousand questions a week, and many more hits. On “Alice,” teens find excellent information about drugs, alcohol, diet, depression, and other health issues. But they also learn how to purchase “adult products” by phone,<sup>21</sup> arrange a threesome,<sup>22</sup> and stay “safe” during sado-masochistic “sex play.”<sup>23</sup>

Yes, madness—that’s the right word.

With messages like this coming from websites recommended to our kids, it should come as no surprise that 34 percent of girls are sexually active by age fifteen. The figure goes up to nearly 80 percent four years later, with more than one-fifth of all fifteen- to nineteen-year-olds reporting two or more partners *in the past year*. Hey, they are exploring their sexuality; it’s only “natural.”

But in these times, anyone “exploring” sexuality is at risk for some two dozen different bacteria, viruses, parasites, and fungi; and infection is likely to happen soon after sexual debut. Who suffers the most? Girls. One of the many facts withheld by “sex educators” is that teen girls are anatomically more vulnerable to sexually transmitted

diseases than boys. They also gloss over the fact that decades of sex education have taken our society from having essentially two sexually transmitted diseases to worry about (syphilis and gonorrhea) to having more than two dozen, including some incurable viruses, and one that's often fatal: HIV. They deem it vital for kids to know there are not one, but *three* types of intercourse; apparently they don't need to know that one of these is so dangerous that a surgeon general warned against it, even *with* a condom.

**An anonymous survey of 10,000 teen girls found they began having sexual intercourse on average at age 15.<sup>30</sup>**

And this question is never, ever raised: what new bug is out there, spreading undetected, an epidemic in the making?

There are some things you need to know about condoms—what sex educators call “protection.” Most teens do not use

them correctly and consistently. Even with proper use, both pregnancy and infection can occur. That's why so many health providers have given unwelcome news to young patients who insist, “*But we used a condom, every time!*”

These young victims are angry, because even after following the rules, after being responsible, they're in trouble: using a condom gave them a false sense of security.<sup>24</sup> And need I mention that latex provides no protection against the emotional distress that often follows teen sexual behavior? As many have observed, condoms do not protect the heart, in particular the female heart.<sup>25</sup> That's another thing SIECUS, Planned Parenthood, and Columbia's “Alice” never tell your daughter.

Again, the priority of our nation's sex educators is to promote sexual freedom, not prevent infections and emotional distress. In fact, as the numbers of infections reach ever more mind-numbing levels, these educators argue for more of last century's methods. The solution to the epidemic is to teach *more* kids they are “sexual from womb to tomb,” encourage *more* teens to question their families' values, and

to send trucks with even *larger* loads of contraceptives to middle schools—to be distributed without parental knowledge. Have they lost their minds?

## Wake Up, America!

You might think I'm bashing sex ed because I'm on the other side of the battle. Not exactly. Abstinence education tells kids to wait for marriage, and for many that message rests on moral foundations. As an Orthodox Jew, I share those values—but you won't find me quoting Leviticus in these pages. I'll leave that to parents and pastors. I write as a physician, and my approach is anchored in hard science.

I wrote this book to tell parents they're being conned by the sex education industry. These powerful organizations present themselves as guardians of our children's health and well-being; they claim to provide kids with all the information and skills they need to make healthy choices. They assert they give your child the same message she hears at home: *you're too young—wait until you're older*. They claim their curricula are “science-based,” age-appropriate, non-judgmental, up-to-date, and medically accurate. And they believe they know better than you do what's best for your kids, so you should trust them, the “experts,” and ignore your gut feelings.

Wake up, America: this is one giant hoax. I know these groups, their values, and curricula. They are *steeped* in ideology, *permeated* with extremism. Non-judgmental? Sure, until they're challenged with scientific facts. Point to the science that discredits their beliefs, and, well, you know the names you'll be called.

They do *not* give young people the same message as parents. Children are inundated from a tender age with a “sex-positive” message; they're taught that sexuality is a life-long adventure, “who they are” from cradle to grave, and that the freedom to explore and express their sexuality is a sacred “right.” While teens are told that delaying sexual behavior is an option—and sure, it's the only 100 percent certain way

to avoid infections and pregnancy—it is not presented as the healthiest choice, the one recommended by experts. Consider the views of Debra Haffner, a recent SIECUS president who is now a minister. Pre-marital sex is so essential, the Reverend Haffner appears to believe, that she'd "refuse to marry a couple who told me that they had shared no sexual behaviors at all."<sup>26</sup>

The experts do *not* provide teens with all they need to know to make informed decisions, nor is their information medically accurate. They dismiss fundamentals of child development, and omit critical findings of neurobiology, gynecology, and infectious disease. HIV information is distorted. The psychological distress associated with teen sex, especially when followed by a genital infection, is whitewashed.

The "experts" are wrong, and parents are right. Boys and girls have vast differences, sexual behavior is profound and consequential, and we reap immense benefits from self-restraint. Mom and Dad should trust their common sense, gut feelings, and traditional values. Children raised by parents who are moderately strict and voice clear expectations about delaying sexual activity, are the kids least likely to engage in harmful behaviors. Yes, that throwback excuse works: "*I can't—my parents would kill me!*"

## **A 911 Emergency**

In the course of my practice, your sons and daughters have shared with me what life has brought them—what cards they've been dealt. They reveal their secrets: *I lied to my parents. My girlfriend gave me herpes. My stepfather raped me. I want die.*

The worst part? When something awful happened that was 100 percent preventable. This category includes, but is not limited to, blisters or warts in private places, meaningless, regrettable sex, pre-cancerous conditions, age-related infertility. *If only I'd known . . .*, patients say. *If only someone had told me.*

Parents, there are so many things your children don't know. There are so many things they are not being told.

Here's the bottom line. We have an emergency here, a 911 emergency. Parents, educators, and health providers must convey the same message to kids: *Right now, sexually transmitted diseases are out of control. We've never had a crisis like this. These infections are painful and nasty, they can even be life-threatening, so you want to avoid them at all costs. Girls are particularly vulnerable. Your health and future are precious; don't take a chance of becoming one of the many people who regret putting their entire trust in a vaccine,<sup>27</sup> or a piece of latex. Be smart, delay sex until you're an adult, then try to find someone who also waited. The closer you get to that ideal, the better your chances of enjoying a life free of these worries.*

This book will help you do that. I've combed through current medical research, and collected what you need to know when you sit down with your child. If you've got religious values backing you up, you're in even better shape.

**Almost half of high school students nationwide and about 62 percent of students in the twelfth grade have had sexual intercourse.<sup>31</sup>**

Make no mistake: this is a battle, and the battleground is our kids' minds and values. It's time for sweeping changes in the way we teach them about intimacy; with one in four teen girls carrying a sexually transmitted infection, we've paid the price for telling them "exploration" is beneficial, and a *Sex and the City* lifestyle can be "safe," or even "safer." In providing that message, we have failed our kids.

The sex ed industry cannot be like *Casablanca's* Captain Renault, "shocked" about soaring rates of genital infections while crusading for "sexual freedom." It's one or the other. If their priority is our children's health, they must focus on fighting herpes and syphilis, not sexism and

homophobia. They must grow up, shed their 1960s mentality, and enter the twenty-first century.

Then they must respond to this catastrophe by declaring war on teen sexual behavior. Yes, *war*—just as we've declared war on smoking, drinking, and trans fats. Stop foisting the ill-conceived notion that sexual openness and exploration is healthy. That was never true, and it's surely not true now, with genital bacteria and viruses infecting another young person *every 3.5 seconds*.<sup>28</sup>

How much worse can it get?

It's time to trash the SIECUS and Planned Parenthood curricula, along with the sites they recommend, and start over, from scratch. Sex education in the twenty-first century should have one agenda: to keep kids free of unnecessary physical and emotional distress. It will require straight talk with all the sobering facts. There's much to look forward to, kids will be told, but you've got to play it smart. It will remind them: you are responsible for yourselves; you alone will determine your sexual health; it will convince them that momentary pleasures are definitely *not* "worth it." And it will give them our vote of confidence—we know you can do it.

This book is a tool for parents, health care providers, and teachers to counter the destructive messages that kids are getting—not only from MTV, but from national organizations supported by their tax dollars. It sounds an alarm, delineates the issues, and provides practical solutions.

*If only I'd known . . .*, patients tell me. *If only someone had told me.* My hope is that the information in these pages will help spare parents, teachers, health providers—anyone involved in the lives of young people—from hearing that plea in the future.

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