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I · N · S · T · I · T · U · T · E
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Psychoanalytic Perspectives on Dating, Mating and Procreating In 21st Century America

Keynote Address: Life and Sex in the Old Days: A Cross Cultural, Historic and Impressionistic View of Human Mating Experience

Paul Lippmann, Ph.D.

As if overnight, we are moving increasingly rapidly from our ancient animal-mammalian and early human origins to new forms of human interaction (electronic, disembodied, virtual, post-human). As the natural world is superseded in importance by the electronic universe, we are increasingly adrift in our own future motion with less and less apparent mooring in ancient traditions. In this respect, I will attempt to explore major cultural variables as they have impacted on mating life through the centuries. I will talk about the species' powerful drive toward expansion until we are too many, the ways in which religious, geographic, and economic forces have shaped the way people get together, and the enormous impact of rapid technological change on sexual experience.

Panel I: Dating and Mating

Hooking-Up: Some Thoughts on Adolescent Sexual Behavior

Pasqual Pantone, Ph.D.

Current adolescent sexual behavior appears to many adults to be decidedly more casual than it used to be. "Hooking up", the term favored by adolescents, denotes a wide range of sexual activity from holding hands and kissing all the way to intercourse. The term at once conveys a sexual experience and obscures what actually transpires. The good news is that because adolescents live in a sexualized media and techno culture, they face fewer inhibitions in discussing sexual issues in treatment. Among healthier adolescents, there is a tendency to face their desires as an integrated part of one's self, rather than an aspect of self relegated to "not-me".

"Simulation Entrapment" and Online Dating: From Screen to Fantasy and Back Again

Todd Essig, Ph.D.

Limitless immediacy echoes all around our techno-frenzied society, including in the experience of online daters. While dating technologies frequently work, there are also risks; people can get so trapped by the simulations technology provides

they let the screen gratify fantasy without risking the fleshy trouble of actually getting to know someone. Clinical examples of both "simulation entrapment" and success with new forms of dating will be discussed.

The Use of the Internet During Various Stages of Coming Out

Deborah Glazer, Ph.D.

For many LGBTQ individuals, coming out is a life long process, and the Internet can be useful in dating and mating at all phases. Many young people find that the anonymity of the Internet can help them meet people for a less threatening exploration of their sexuality. At other points, the Internet can be used to find people with whom they can explore split off or less integrated aspects of the self. Later in life, it can be used to form a community or build new relationships after a loss. Clinical material will be used to illustrate these contemporary trends.

Panel II: Procreating

Reluctant Pioneers

Anne Malave, Ph.D.

The reproductive revolution following the development of in vitro fertilization has presented people facing fertility challenges with options that require personal, interpersonal, and intrapsychic adjustments. This presentation will address how these common and expectable changes and reintegrations impact and alter our understanding of interpersonal psychoanalysis.

“Pride and Prejudice” in Our Reproductive Choices

Allison Rosen, Ph.D.

Reproductive medicine can provide glimpses into our deepest longings and greatest fears. Through discussing complex cases of egg and embryo donation, I will highlight our assumptions, internalized racial and socio-political values and the importance of psychoanalytic theories for understanding our reproductive choices. Two cases will start the discussion: The first case will be an African couple wishing to adopt a Caucasian embryo from a single mother who used donated eggs and sperm to create the embryo; the second case will be a couple in which the intended mother has advanced cancer and wishes to use her niece as a gestational carrier.

What's happened to 'Man'-kind?

Gurmeet S. Kanwal, M.D.

Everywhere in the media, as well as in our practices, we hear of an anxious concern about men and manhood in our culture. Traditional psychoanalytic models of male psychology do little to help us understand men in today's shifting cultural dynamics. What impact have societal developments such as the feminist

movement, the LGBT movement, the reproductive revolution, and the technology revolution had on the self-definition and self-actualization of the 21st century American male? Using clinical material, psychoanalytic theory and sociological perspectives, I will argue that America is witnessing the emergence of a new kind of manhood.

Advising Clients of Legal Issues When Creating Families through ART

Carol Buell, J.D.

The use of ART in family creation or expansion creates legal challenges for your patients and their extended families. Your patients must seek the advice of attorneys and financial planners knowledgeable about how “family” is legally defined. Extended family must also carefully define who is a grandchild, niece or nephew for gifting and wealth transfer purposes. For alternative families, greater challenges arise in protecting children born as a result of ART, as the absence of state and federally recognized marriage places children and their parents at tremendous risk. The storing of frozen embryos and their posthumous use by your patients raise additional issues. This presentation will summarize the legal concerns that clinicians should know about when working with patients who are using ARTs to bring children into their families.

Summing Up and Looking Ahead:

The Futures of "Dating, Mating, and Procreating"

Todd Essig, Ph.D.

No one can predict the future, not really. But then again, no one can really reconstruct the past and that hasn't stopped psychoanalysis from taking up the topic. By expanding on those practices of dating, mating, and procreating presented during this symposium, several future scenarios will be explored to describe what psychoanalytic clinicians will likely encounter in the years ahead. The motto "Be Prepared" has never been timelier than in our post peak-oil emerging culture of simulation and enhancement.