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Introduction

Australian society is puritannical. Sexuality has traditionally occupied a place behind the shelter sheds or in the bushes down by the creek. We gleaned our knowledge of sex and reproduction from graffiti on public toilet walls and *Mother and Daughter* sex education films of sterile diagrams which wriggled on the screen. Sex and reproduction were always inextricably linked. Sex without reproduction was either sinful, pornographic or deviant.

In the sixties we had a Sexual Revolution. Sex was talked about. Sixteen-year-old daughters were on the Pill. Pornography became more acceptable. Groovy women's magazines carried articles exhorting more women to forget their hangups and leap into bed. Someone discovered the female orgasm. The Church Fathers bewailed society's degeneration and permissiveness. Sex without reproduction was no longer sinful and only slightly pornographic. Deviants were still deviants.

Thanks to the Sexual Revolution we now have Sex Shops. In Sex Shops one can buy all sorts of aids to sex. Sex shops, like the sexual revolution, are mainly geared to male sexuality. Sex Shops don't sell contraceptives. Neither do they disseminate knowledge of sexuality. In this respect, Sex Shops are similar to schools.

In the seventies, young men and women in shag'n wagons at the Drive-In become (in a hurry) married couples for whom sex takes place at night, in the bedroom, with the lights off. Meanwhile, deviants have received a lot of publicity. But they are still deviants.

This booklet was compiled by a group of women who were/are angry. We are confronted by widespread ignorance concerning sexuality, reproduction, sexual diseases, birth control and sexual alternatives. We believe the confusion, mystification and ignorance which surround sexuality serve a political purpose of control in a sexually repressive society.

The current sexual norm is both heterosexual and male. Male in that the popular images of sexuality are male-originated and male-defined in the same way as the stereotype of a sexy woman is male-created. Female sexuality is largely invisible and unexplored. Our ignorance of our bodies and our lack of freedom to explore our potential in our own way renders most women unaware of the dimensions and possibilities of female sexuality.

The heterosexual norm negates the possibility of a free sexuality. Children are born with the potential to become bisexual, homosexual, heterosexual, asexual. The heterosexual norm is culturally imposed and perpetuated through prejudice and persecution. As a result, homosexual women and men suffer an acute and painful oppression.

We have attempted, in compiling this booklet, to break down the heterosexual assumption which lies behind other sex education manuals. We believe the only destructive relationship is one based on exploitation and oppression. Thus, the articles explore the possibilities of different types of relationships.



Many of the articles are written by women, and with a feminist perspective. We do not apologize for this. The established media constantly bombard us with the other point of view.

In discussing physiology, anatomy, birth control and sexual infections, we have emphasised the possibility of self help. Body processes and the relation of people to health care have been mystified by the medical profession, who use their knowledge as a means of control and power. Women and men have traditionally been prevented from making decisions and choices concerning our bodies and our sexual relationships. Through acquiring knowledge of our bodily processes, diseases and birth control, we can break down the barriers between people and take control of our own lives.

Our collective had many points of difference. Some of us are lesbian, some are heterosexual, some are bisexual. We are from the city and the country. We are students at Teachers Colleges, Institutes of Technology and Universities. But we had one thing in common. All of us are women. As women, we experience oppression and recognise the urgent need for change.

We believe it is necessary for women and men to confront the damaging heterosexist values of our society. A society which uses ignorance, mystification and arbitrary uniformity as a means of control and as tools of power. We wish to open up the possibilities of freedom, while believing that a far broader transformation of society is necessary before a state of real freedom can be achieved.

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