

Summaries

The demise of sexual innocence

Paul Schnabel

There is no shortage of literature on the social history of sexual repression. This article aims at a sociohistorical interpretation of the sexual revolution of the 1960s and its aftermath. The importance of romantic love as an agent in the liberation of sexuality is emphasized, and the demise of sexual innocence is presented as a consequence of the growing explicitness of sexual knowledge. A striking feature of modern sexual practice and discourse is that it gradually acquired a more public character, while at the same time it remained a private affair. Attention is paid to the growing awareness of the more aggressive and deleterious aspects of sexuality. The sexual revolution has started a process of domestication and civilization of sexuality, sexuality has not simply become liberated.

The rise of the sexual moratorium

Ron van der Vliet

In the course of this century the age of the onset of menstruation has gone down from about 15 years to circa 13 years. At the same time the age at which people first engage in sexual intercourse decreased. This change took place even more rapidly. This resulted in a reduction of the time gap between sexual maturity and the onset of sexual activity. Despite common beliefs about the effects of the so-called 'sexual revolution', this change started among the pre-war generations and continued until this day. There was no acceleration in this process during the late 1960s and early 1970s. In the meantime another change took place: people got married at an older age. Together with the earlier onset of sexual activity, this resulted in a new phase in peoples lives: a sexual moratorium. Before young people enter the adult world and adopt its responsibilities by starting a family, the moratorium allows for exploring sexual relations while avoiding strong commitments. Despite the relative freedom offered in this phase, most young people do not lead a promiscuous life, but rather, they make initial choices regarding intimate relations, while at the same time keeping options open.

The sexual revolution of adolescents

Evert Ketting

This paper discusses some major aspects of the rapidly changing sexual attitudes

and behaviour of adolescents in The Netherlands during the 1960s and 1970s. In that period it became widely accepted for youngsters to have sexual contacts. At the same time these contacts actually increased. This process of change should be called a cultural revolution, because it occurred in a relatively short period of time, and more importantly, because it meant the moral separation of sexuality from marriage and procreation. On the moral level, sexuality, marriage and procreation had been inseparable for centuries. A decisive factor triggering this revolutionary change has been the introduction of modern, reliable methods of contraception. It is hypothesized that contraception in a way replaced the restrictive sexual morality regarding youngsters, as it offered an alternative solution to the old cultural problem of finding effective ways to bridge the gap between the age of physical maturity and the age at which people are socially in a position to start having a family.

Together and alone. Advice on sexroles in a Dutch periodical (1938-1985)
H.Q. Röling

Since 1938 advice on sexual problems is given in a monthly issued by the Dutch League for Sexual Reform (NVSH). The title of this regular feature is 'We want to know'. From the beginning until the 1960s the advice on sexroles aims at strengthening the steady relationship as a basis of sexual happiness. Men are encouraged to restrain themselves, women to be more active. In the 1970s priority is given to finding out for yourself what gives sexual pleasure, without much regard for the partner. Genital contact in sexual relations is considered less important than in former years.

Funfair in Amsterdam or the culture of the sexual revolution
Gert Hekma

The sexual revolution was also a sexual happening. This article discusses several meanings of the sexual fair of Amsterdam of the late 1960s in the context of the sexual revolution. The sexual fair consisted mainly of the theater of the nude and a lot of rhetoric. The theater of the nude was a 'Gesamtkunstwerk': art, ideology and pornography, improvisation and provocation. It ended very quickly through differentiation, commercialisation and the rise of freudo-marxist and feminist ideologies.

Diseases of the revolution. Venereal diseases in The Netherlands since 1960
Annet Mooij

In this article the recent history of sexually transmitted diseases in The Netherlands is used as an indication for changes in sexual behaviour which took place

during the sexual revolution. Statistical data concerning teenagers, male homosexuals, foreigners and sex ratio are analyzed. Besides some changes in the categories of people that are most likely to catch VD, the sexual revolution shows a marked shift in the type of dominant diseases. Both the increase in the total amount of venereal patients and the appearance of 'new' diseases did not receive a lot of attention during the 1960s and 1970s; the simultaneous policy of prevention is linked to bio-medical and socio-sexual developments. With the advent of AIDS this lack of attention came to an end, although it is concluded that sexual behaviour is only partially influenced by AIDS.

Notes on child abuse and incest. The medical definition, the feminist definition and their relation to one another

Rineke van Daalen

The recent 'discovery' of incest between adults and children followed the 'discovery' of child abuse, which came a decade earlier. The two phenomena occur within the family context, which makes them in many respects comparable. But they have been exposed in completely different ways. Child abuse was discovered by professionals, namely by medical practitioners. It became a social and political issue thanks to a restricted medical definition, in which child abuse was seen in terms of a disease just like other illnesses. Incest was brought to public notice by the feminist movement. It was presented as an example of social injustice, of the suppression of women by men. According to this definition, which emphasized the unequal power relationships between the sexes, incest was seen as a separate phenomenon which stood apart from broader issues of child abuse.

Fatal sex. Cause and reasons of murdercases with homosexual victims

Frank van Gemert

In the 1980s, one out of every eight murders committed in Amsterdam had a male homosexual victim. On the basis of seventeen cases from police-archives, seven psychiatric reports and seven interviews with potential victims, this article draws a picture of the idealtypes of both victim and murderer. A gay man (age 50) takes home a straight male prostitute (age 20) who kills and also robs him. Not in the robbery, but in the rancour of the young man lies the motive, because he feels stigmatised and exploited in his marginal position.

Sex-consumers

Lucie van Mens

During the 1950s and 1960s sexual reformers as well as people engaged in fighting venereal disease predicted that prostitution was to disappear due to the

increase of free love. Based on interviews with 130 prostitute's customers, this article traces to what extent this prediction came true. The article focusses on the buying behaviour of the customers. Age varied between twenty-one and sixty-five, fifty-five of the men were single. It turned out that for the majority of the men under study, visiting a prostitute was not a substitute for a steady partner, but rather a strategy to remain independent. The men who had a steady relationship visited prostitutes to satisfy their desire for adventure and diversion. The frequency of visits to prostitutes ranged from several times a year to two or three times a week. More than half of the men went two times a month or more. The men continued to visit prostitutes over many years. Visiting prostitutes was a habit they did not find easy to overcome.

The prostitution market is differentiated. Depending on taste and budget prostitute's customers can go to street prostitutes, prostitutes working in bars, window prostitutes, call-girls, sex clubs, etc. The various kinds of prostitution have their own ambiance and their own type of entertainment. Although the primary reason for visiting a prostitute is sex, men choose for the ambiance that suits them best. Moreover, the way the prostitute reacts to her customer plays an important part.

Prostitution is by no means marginalised by free, non-commercial love. The general increase in sexual freedom offered entrepreneurs in the prostitution business the possibility to differentiate their supply and to advertise openly. Due to increasing affluence more men can afford to visit prostitutes. The sex business anticipates men's desires and so continues to generate new demand. The existence of prostitution turns out to have no connection with lack of sexual freedom.

