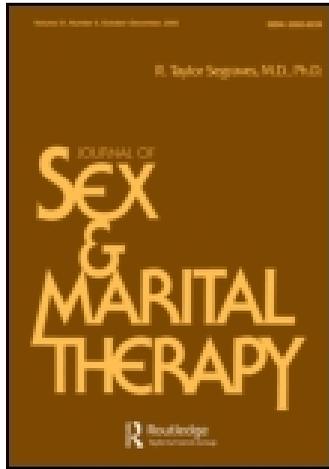


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A Review of "Human Sexuality and Its Problems (3rd ed.)"

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Human Sexuality and Its Problems (3rd ed.), by *John Bancroft*. London: Elsevier, 2009. 546 pages, \$106.00 (paperback).

John Bancroft is the former director of and current senior research fellow at the Kinsey Institute; he is a leading authority in the field of human sexuality. In the third edition of *Human Sexuality and Its Problems*, updated from the second edition published in 1989 (the first edition being published in 1983), he has written a comprehensive, broad, cross-disciplinary reference text on human sexuality. He has undertaken an enormous task, given the explosive increase in literature, and has succeeded.

The core structural theme and major strength of this volume is the careful integration of biological, psychological, and sociocultural viewpoints and literature.

This book is intended for health professionals, academics, and students. It is divided into 16 chapters and begins with a discussion of models of human sexuality and the role of theory.

The first half of the book discusses biological and sociocultural topics, including sexual differentiation and the development of gender identity, sexual arousal and response, sexual development, heterosexuality, sexuality and aging, homosexuality and bisexuality, sexual variations, transgender, gender nonconformity, and transvestism.

The second part of the book more closely examines problems related to sexuality, including the nature of problematic sexuality, and assessment and treatment options for helping people with sexual problems. He presents excellent reviews of treatment and outcome research for problems of reduced sexual interest or response, problematic sexual behavior, and sexual or gender identity problems.

Separate chapters also discuss sexual aspects of medical practice and sexual aspects of fertility. He has added a new chapter on HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections, noting that funding for sex research has been driven by HIV transmission (Chapter 14). A final chapter on sexual offenses presents an excellent cross-national and cross-cultural discussion of sexual offenses comparing the United States and the United Kingdom and focuses not only on offenses and offenders and their treatment, but also on victims.

After his initial discussion of theory, Bancroft continues to elaborate theories, models, and hypotheses throughout other chapters. The dual-control model, for example, is explained in the theoretical chapter and then discussed in many of the chapters, such as when he discusses high-risk behavior and homosexuality and bisexuality. Then, in discussing sex therapy for the couple in Chapter 12, problems of reduced sexual interest or response, Bancroft states that the dual-control model guides how he conceptualizes the treatment process. He covers controlled and uncontrolled treatment outcome studies, prognostic indicators of response to sex therapy,

empirical validation, and outcomes of integrated psychological and medical treatment.

Of particular clinical value is the section on current status of the treatment of sexual problems, including when to treat and which treatment to use, with clinical illustrations.

As in previous editions, Bancroft has included a personal statement in which he is explicit about his values, stressing the importance of responsibility, gender equality, and acceptance of responsible diversity.

Bancroft's explication on various subjects, such as sadomasochism, is detailed and always accompanied with a critical sense of the strength and nature of the evidence and articles he presents and the conclusions that can be drawn from them.

If there is a criticism that can be levied, it is that although the breadth of Bancroft's expertise is extensive and his grasp penetrating, the literature reviewed is not exhaustive and the scholarly reader would still have to consult specialized texts or articles to fill in the gaps in any particular knowledge area.

This book is encyclopedic and a valuable source of information for both scholars and clinicians. It presents an exceptional review of salient theory and research in the field of human sexology in a wide variety of domains and should be in everyone's library. We highly recommend it.

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Attachment Theory and Research in Clinical Work With Adults, by Joseph H. Obegi and Ety Berant (Eds.) New York and London: Guilford Press, 2009. 529 pages, \$55.00 (hardback).

Various ideas and research findings regarding "the enduring ties that one adult has for another who fulfills needs for safety and comfort" (p. 4) have been compiled by editors Joseph H. Obegi and Ety Berant in this comprehensive book. Obegi and Berant take an optimistic view toward the potential of applying various outlooks regarding attachment research and theory in clinical settings. They highlight that a variety of relationships can "rehabilitate, aggravate or undermine previous feelings of both security and insecurity" (p. 6). The clinicians represented in this book are looking through the lens of a client who is acting too dominant or submissive, or too warm or cool, and find that associated with each of these four attachment styles, a systematic pattern of problems often emerges.