Chapter 12 - Morality, Marriage, and Human Sexuality

General Overview
The topics in this chapter link up with the previous chapter and the chapter on abortion since sexuality is behind a good deal of lying, cheating, etc., as well as abortion and numerous other topics. Quite a few of these topics are covered here and the advantage of this approach is that students will come away with a broader sense of concept in sexual morality than they might otherwise get from studying pornography or prostitution on their own.

Class Suggestions
Because of the broad range of topics you might assign one topic to, say, groups of 5 or 6 students to report back to the class on later, perhaps in the form of a group presentation. You might also show a good video or two– on these issues that usually receives a round of applause, primarily from the males. However, the main point is to provide alternative perspectives and factual information that may enable students to see topics in new ways. Students are usually keen to discuss these issues and are curious about what their peers think. This natural interest can be used to generate interesting discussions, projects, essays, etc. The cases in the textbook are useful and the recent Supreme Court decision on the Texas sodomy law is worth discussion and analysis. Questions here about ‘nature’, ‘natural law’, etc. are paramount, and instructors may want to begin with an examination of these concepts, perhaps revisiting the ‘naturalistic fallacy’ as well as the notions of individual freedom.
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Key Questions: Examine the arguments for and against sexual freedom. State your view and carefully justify it making reference to the distinction between private and public. 2. Is gay marriage morally acceptable? Why or why not? What moral principles underlie your view? 3. ‘Pornography is an acceptable practice because it brings a lot of pleasure to a lot of people’. What kind of argument is this? What are its strengths and weaknesses? 4. ‘Prostitution exploits women and children, supports the drug trade, spreads sexual disease and breaks up families’ - Discuss. 5. Examine the role and function of the concept of ‘nature’ in the morality of sexuality.

Chapter Summary

Meaning and purpose of human sexuality
1. Procreation
2. Pleasure
3. Expression of love
4. Expression of friendship/liking

Moral issues and the public aspect of human sexuality
1. Rape, child molestation and sadism considered harmful to the public and controlled by law
2. Pornography, homosexuality, sex outside marriage, prostitution, masturbation, nonmonogamous marriage and ‘unnatural’ or ‘perverted’ sex are all activities considered by some to be against public interest

Arguments against sexual freedom
1. Violation of tradition and family values
2. Domino argument
3. Offense to public taste
4. Social diseases and AIDS

Arguments for sexual freedom
1. Individual freedom
2. Traditions seen as irrelevant
3. Refutation of the Domino argument
4. Offensive to public taste (don’t do, look, buy, etc. of??)
5. Social diseases and AIDS promote responsibility without restricting choice

Premarital sex

Arguments against
1. The undermining of traditional morality and family values
2. The encouragement of promiscuity
3. Social diseases and AIDS
4. Fostering of guilt and ostracism
5. Having children
6. The compatibility and experience fallacy

Arguments for
1. The obsolescence of the old traditions
2. Social diseases and AIDS – responsibility without elimination of choice
3. The promiscuity fallacy
4. The guilt and ostracism fallacy
5. Contraception and responsibility
6. Sexual experience and compatibility
7. Sexual pleasure
8. A private, not a public matter

Sex in marriage – type relationships (including non-legal)
Continuous and lasting
Purpose of sex in this relationship
1. Intimate expression of love
2. Procreation

Various types of marriage relationships
1. Monogamy
2. Polygamy
3. Group Marriage

Arguments against non-monogamous marriages
1. Bible advocates marriage
2. Tradition
3. Exclusivity required by law
4. Social diseases and AIDS eliminated (or greatly reduced)
5. Better for children

Argument for
1. Encourages alternative lifestyles and arrangements where all enter freely and willingly into

Homosexual marriage – Purpose of sex as an expression of love
Arguments against homosexuality
1. ‘Unnatural’ and ‘perverse’
2. Against laws of God
3. Sets bad example for children
4. Homosexuals regarded as main cause of AIDS
5. Offensive to ‘family values’

Arguments for homosexuality
1. Non conclusive ‘proof’ of ‘natural’ laws or God’s law
2. Private issue (recent Supreme Court decision striking down Texas sodomy laws)
3. No link between homosexuality and inclination to child abuse
4. Non incompatibility between homosexuality and ‘family values’

Adultery
Arguments against
1. Violation of most personal and intimate human contract
2. Bad consequences for all affected

Arguments for
1. Private sexual freedom
2. Need not be bad consequences if affairs conducted discreetly

Masturbation
Arguments against
1. Religious – abusing oneself
2. Domino argument
Arguments for
1. Natural and harmless and safe

**Pornography**
*Arguments against*
1. Degrading to human beings
2. Criminal – causes harm
3. Degrading to women
4. Encourages ‘perversions’

*Arguments for*
1. Individual discretion
2. No proof of degradation
3. Help to eliminate repression
4. Crimes covered by other laws
5. ‘Exploitation’ is matter of opinion

**Prostitution**
*Arguments against*
1. Extramarital and commercialized sex is immoral
2. Causes crime
3. Social diseases and AIDS

*Arguments for prostitution*
1. Safe sexual release
2. Victimless crime
3. Social acceptance and governmental control

**Sexual perversion or ‘unnatural’ sexual activity**
Conservative view: All bad
Liberal view: Varies, some bad, some okay, so long as consenting adults is okay

Bestiality – acceptable to extreme liberal