

National Sex Forum has developed a multimedia blitz weekend program for "sexual attitude restructuring." Anyone can come (it costs \$75 per couple). They sit around on pillows and are subjected to simultaneous slides and movies accompanied by running explanations from a staff member. Every possible sex practice—including bestiality, sadism, masturbation, and prac-

tices of other cultures—is depicted and discussed at length. That is "desensitization." Viewers go home somewhat appalled, says McIlvenna, but then they sleep on it and end up thinking "so what." So they come back for "resensitization" the next day, where with more movies and talks they find out how good and normal sexual expression is. Individuals and couples can then come back and work out a program to cope with their particular problems.

The National Sex Forum makes its own films which it distributes to hundreds of institutions, including medical schools, here and abroad. The use of films, both pornographic ones and ones depicting sexual anatomy and activity, has become standard fare in training, education, and therapy. They are used widely in medical schools, where courses on sexuality, unusual a half a decade ago, are now routine. They are particularly useful in changing people's attitudes toward sex, a function which a recent survey showed is probably the primary goal of sexuality courses in medical school. Most doctors are not only unskilled in confronting a patient's sex problem, but many are too uptight about the subject to try. James Maddock, who runs the human sexuality program at the University of Minnesota medical school, suggests that physicians have particularly high anxiety levels when it comes to sex because of the type of personality that is drawn to doctoring. Many have "obsessive compulsive" personalities which make it difficult for them to deal with an emotion-laden and ambiguous subject that requires a tolerant, sensitive, and, above all, relaxed approach. They also find it difficult to explore the subtleties of sex relationships when they are keyed up to making daily life-or-death decisions, he notes.

Harold Lief, who heads the 6-year-old Center for the Study of Sex Education in Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania, is a pioneer in sex education for medical students. In the early 1960's, he says, only three schools offered any instruction in sexuality. In 1968 there were 30. Now, according to a survey he recently completed with his colleague David Reed, 106 of the country's 112 medical schools teach it, and in 60 percent of these the courses are required as part of the core curriculum. Medical students overwhelmingly favor such courses, the survey finds, and are even more enthusiastic about them than faculty members. The content of the courses includes instruc-

tion on normal sexual behavior, its variations and deviations, sexual disorders, psychosexual development, and treatment of disorders, including rudimentary counselling skills. Half the schools invite spouses or "significant other partners" to attend with the students. While sex instruction is particularly relevant to the fields of gynecology and psychiatry, new emphasis is also being placed on counselling people partially disabled by disease (diabetes, for example, can produce impotency), heart attacks, operations, or advanced age. A cardiac patient, for example, is no longer vaguely told to "take it easy," but is treated to a frank discussion of safe levels of exertion. Old people also stand to benefit. Despite Masters and Johnson's affirmation that sex can enhance life up to the last minute, a recent study of doctor-patient relationships showed that most physicians felt inadequate when it came to dealing with sex and the senior citizen, that most of the doctors regarded it as "unimportant," and even gerontologists agreed that for old people it was "just a memory."

Of all the sex projects springing up across the land, one of the newest, and most ambitious sounding, is the research, therapy, and training program being set up at the State University of New York at Stony Brook. The impetus has come from Stanley Yolles, head of the department of psychiatry there and former head of the National Institute of Mental Health, where, before his departure several years ago, he unsuccessfully sought to establish an in-house sexual research project. Yolles has been gathering together an interdisciplinary team of educators, clinicians, and researchers with the object of establishing an "international academy of sex research," a mecca for sex researchers from around the world. At present, according to Joseph LoPiccolo, head of the sex therapy and research unit, Stony Brook is one of very few places where research is being done on new behavioral techniques for alleviating sexual dysfunction. LoPiccolo is well known in sex circles for his explorations of the potentials of masturbation. His innovations include a detailed program of masturbation for inorgasmic women, and a routine, involving pornography and masturbation, that has enabled homosexual men to respond sexually to their wives. (To LoPiccolo's surprise, these men, rather than learning to favor women as sex partners, learned instead to become firmly bisexual.)

Briefing

on any of these issues, Metcalf refused to sign the conference report.

Most of the other differences in the House and Senate versions were resolved in the Senate's favor. These included provisions to prevent a pro-nuclear bias in the new Energy Research and Development Agency (ERDA), to promote energy conservation and environmental protection in ERDA, and to tighten safety regulation (for instance, the NRC will have to make public immediately any safety-related "abnormal occurrences" at nuclear power plants).

The Joint Committee on Atomic Energy (JCAE) will be losing much of its sway on energy matters. In the House, ERDA (with the exception of its atomic energy component) will be overseen by the expanded Committee on Science and Astronautics, to be known starting next January as the Committee on Science and Technology. In the Senate, jurisdiction may be scattered among several committees. The NRC will be under the jurisdiction of the JCAE.

Passage of the energy act comes on the heels of President Ford's announcement that Interior Secretary Rogers C. B. Morton, who once briefly headed the White House Domestic Council's energy committee during the days of revolving energy czardoms, will head a new national energy board and serve as "overall boss" of the nation's energy program. Thus it appears, assuming the era of continuous shuffling and reshuffling of energy policies is past, that the framework has been laid for the country's 10-year, \$20-billion plunge toward "energy self-sufficiency."—C.H.

Erratum: A "briefing" pertaining to the law suit in the taconite pollution case which appeared in the 18 October issue of *Science* referred incorrectly to Solicitor General Robert H. Bork's part in the so-called "Saturday night massacre" of last year. Bork dismissed the special prosecutor, Archibald Cox, but he had no role whatever in the dismissal of Attorney General Elliot L. Richardson and his deputy, William D. Ruckelshaus.