Sexuality in (a) Christian Perspective: An Integrated Understanding of God’s Gracious Gift

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By way of orienting ourselves...

- A few experiences we have had to illustrate the importance of knowledge of and comfort with sexuality
- Pneumopsychososiosomatic beings
- Sexuality defined
- Sexual Learning and “Sex Ed”
- Sexuality as holy longing (Rolheiser, 2014)
- Authentic sexuality (Balswick and Balswick, 2008)
- All that we are as sexual beings
- Ethical Codes, Personal Attitudes, and Professional Conduct
- A bit of history...so we hopefully don’t (keep) repeating it (Small, 1974)
Healthy Sexuality

“... sexuality lies at the center of the spiritual life. A healthy sexuality is the single most powerful vehicle there is to lead us to selflessness and joy, just as unhealthy sexuality helps constellate selfishness and unhappiness as does nothing else. We will be happy in this life, depending upon whether or not we have a healthy sexuality.” --Rohlheiser (p. 192)
“To be authentic is to be real, genuine, believable & trustworthy. While it is appropriate to speak of normal, functional sexuality or healthy sexuality . . . we define & describe sexuality as something that is authentic, as opposed to something inauthentic (a counterfeit version of the real thing). Due to the complex factors contributing to & barriers hindering the development of sexuality, our task of defining authentic sexuality is far from simple. . . . . We begin with the presupposition that authentic sexuality is meant to be a congruent, integral part of one’s total being. Further, we believe that God intends for our sexuality to be a real, genuine, believable, & trustworthy part of ourselves. In this way we embrace what God has created & declare with God, ‘It is very good!’” (p. 64).
What Is Sexuality?

Sexuality is a broad term:

- All that we are as sexual beings . . .
- Reflecting & integrating
  - The biological
  - The psychological
  - The relational
  - The ethical
  - The cultural
  - The spiritual
Interactive Development of Authentic Sexuality

Balswick & Balswick (p. 31)

An interactive developmental theory of authentic human sexuality

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**Interactive Development of Authentic Sexuality**

**BIOLOGICAL VARIABLES**

- Genes
- Hormones
- Mother’s Physical Condition
- Bodily Needs

**PRENATAL**

- Emotional security

**BIRTH**

**INFANCY**

**EARLY CHILDHOOD**

- Culturally defined meaning of sexuality

**MIDDLE CHILDHOOD**

- Meaningful same/opposite sex friendship

**PRE-ADOLESCENCE**

**ADOLESCENCE**

**YOUNG ADULTHOOD**

**MIDDLE ADULTHOOD**

**LATE ADULTHOOD**

- “Use it or lose it”

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Sexuality in a Christian Perspective  Michael & Michael

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Sexuality: Six Areas

(Dailey, 2017)

Thank you, Dennis Dailey (Kansas University), for your contribution to the following model.
Identity
Intimacy
Physicality
Generativity
Sexualization

Socio-Cultural Milieu
Sexual Identity

Who I am as a sexual being and how I feel about myself, both personally and in regard to my culture’s approach to what it means to be a sexual being.
Intimacy

Interpersonal closeness to another human being
My knowledge of and attitudes toward my body and the bodies of others in reference to sexuality
Generativity

The issue of new life
Socialization

The process one goes through in being acculturated as a sexual being in a given family & culture
Sexualization

The non-sexual use of sex
Identity
Sexualization
Intimacy
Socialization
Physicality
Generativity

Rand & Phyllis Michael
Adapted from Dailey (2017) by permission

Socio-Cultural Milieu
Application

- Personal reflection-and-application
- Psychoeducational application
- Clinical application


References and Resources Used in Creating this Presentation (cont')


Websites and Ethical Codes
(Listed in alphabetical order)

https://www.aacc.net/code-of-ethics-2/
https://www.aamft.org/Legal_Ethics/Code_of_Ethics.aspx
https://www.aapc.org/page/Ethics
https://www.aasect.org/code-ethics
https://www.counseling.org/resources/aca-code-of-ethics.pdf
https://www.apa.org/ethics/code/
https://www.bettermarriages.org/
https://www.cbeinternational.org/
https://www.ncfr.org/about/ncfr-standards-ethics-conduct
https://www.nationalhumanservices.org/ethical-standards-for-hs-professionals
https://siecus.org/
https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics
About Phyllis and Rand Michael
(some stuff anyway)

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