



TEEN-AGERS SPEAK THEIR MINDS ON SMOKING

Youths recommend 'glamour' for anti-cigarette campaign

If anyone hopes to dissuade America's youth from smoking, they will have to cloak abstinence in glamour, sophistication, and prestige while playing down the direct "it's-bad-for-you" approach.

This is the crux of the message from a group of 125 teen-agers who have examined their own attitudes toward smoking, to help guide federal officials now seeking to shape a sound antismoking campaign. Sponsored by the Children's Bureau, the National Conference on Smoking and Youth brought together in Washington youngsters from every state, plus Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands.

Conference Chairman Roy Sorenson dubbed the meeting "the first major move by a federal agency since the Surgeon General's report." He said that the teen-agers' recommenda-

tions could influence the Health, Education, and Welfare Department, the Bureau, schools, health departments, and public and private agencies as they make their educational plans.

The conferees, ranging from 14 to 18 years, included heavy smokers, light smokers, and nonsmokers. Some had outstanding high-school academic records; others were dropouts. One delegate was an Eskimo from Alaska; another, a Tlingit Indian who performs with the famous Chilcat Dancers of the Pacific Northwest.

"Speak out freely," Mrs. Katherine Brownell Oettinger, chief of the Bureau, told the delegates. "We feel you have a contribution to make that adults cannot match: your internal viewpoint of yourselves and your peers." And speak out is precisely what these teen-aged advisors did.

Among their suggestions was the use of Madison Avenue techniques to make smoking seem less attractive. "The large sums of money spent by the tobacco industry to sell cigarettes can be better and more honestly used to build prestige for nonsmoking," the young people said. Ironically, this proposal came on the heels of the tobacco industry's new code of advertising ethics. The teen-agers generally favored the industry's code, but doubted that it would substantially affect young people's smoking habits.

Other suggestions included using indirect appeals to make nonsmoking seem smart. Indirection, they said, is more acceptable to youth than the head-on "smoke now, die later" attack. Educational programs "must appeal to self-interest in the present."

Noting that unattractive antismoking propaganda is no match for slick advertisements, the young people called for improving pamphlets and films aimed at teen audiences. The kind of comic book satire identified with *Mad* magazine may also have a place in educational programs, they suggested.

Youth should speak to youth, the delegates emphasized. College students might be more effective campaigners in high schools than adults.

Members of one discussion group criticized schools for "apathy" on the smoking question. These youngsters felt that school officials were more worried about "images" than about the health of their students.

Schoolteachers should have more facts at their fingertips, the conferees added. As an ideal, they pointed to the Tulsa, Okla., school system where the American Cancer Society and the health department have sponsored a workshop on cigarette smoking.

Some teens described legal bans on selling cigarettes to minors as a "mockery." A few think state laws should be repealed because "they promote lawlessness." Others recommended that stores selling tobacco should, like liquor stores, be licensed and vending machines outlawed.

At day's end, Chairman Sorenson thanked the group. "We mean to mount a steady educational effort," he declared. "It will be sounder and more effective because of you." ■

THERAPEUTIC HOPE FOR HOMOSEXUALS

New York Academy of Medicine says psychiatry may produce beneficial changes

Homosexuality is a disease and, as such, "it may be treated with improvement and success in some cases," says the New York Academy of Medicine in a special report.

Conceding that therapy is difficult and that the prognosis must be guarded, the Academy's public health committee has urged prompt correction of what it calls the common misconception that treatment is useless. The effectiveness of therapy depends on the depth of entrenchment of the perversion, as well as the strength of the patient's desire to modify it, reports the committee, which is headed by Dr. Frederick R. Bailey.

The Academy committee stresses that the medical profession should clearly state its position on homosexuality and what can be done about it. "Yet, relatively little has been published about it in the medical and health journals, and there have been still fewer authoritative statements of position."

Homosexuals, if not more numerous today, are at least "more open and obtrusive" than they were in the past, according to the report. It points out that homosexuals seem to be more formally organized, with a magazine and central office of their own. "They are determined to be accepted not as lawbreakers, sinners, or even as sick people, but as a different kind of people leading an acceptable kind of life." Beyond that, the committee says, homosexuals claim that theirs is a "noble, preferable way of life, and the perfect answer to the problem of population explosion."

Countering this point of view, the report says that homosexuality fulfills all the requirements to place it in the category of illness. It terms the homosexual an emotionally immature individual who has not acquired a normal capacity to develop satisfying heterosexual relationships. "Consequently, overt homosexuality may be an expression of fear of the opposite sex and inability to accept adult responsibility, such as marriage."

Quick to take issue with the Academy's description of homosexuality as psychopathologic was the Mattachine Society, one of the groups that promote homosexual causes. A director of the Society, Dr. Wardell B. Pomeroy—who is a co-author of the Kinsey Report—said: "I believe people can have homosexual relations and not be emotionally ill." He added that, in his view, homosexuality as such is not the cause of mental illness, although it may be a symptom.

Early Influences Stressed

In discussing the causes of homosexuality, the Academy report notes that there is, at present, more solid information about environmental factors than constitutional determinants. "The disposition toward deviant sexual behavior is actually formulated very early in a child's life, and the child's relationship with his parents is very significant." Important disturbing influences are childhood neglect, rejection, overprotection, and overindulgence. "Homosexuality is often associated with a fatherless home or its equivalent—an absent or neglectful father—or a dominant mother with a weak, ineffectual mate.

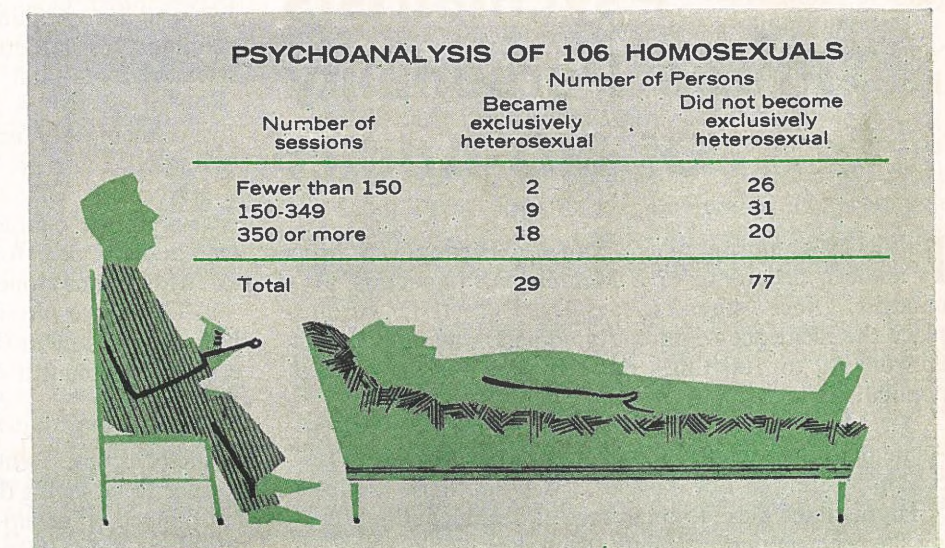
"Accurate diagnosis of homosexuality may be difficult unless there is

admission or incontrovertible evidence," the report states. "It should be noted that mannerisms and characteristics of a person do not per se warrant a diagnosis of homosexuality."

Psychotherapy offers "the greatest probability of benefit," the Academy maintains. As evidence that therapy can produce positive results, the report cites a study by Dr. Irving Bieber and his associates. They found that of a group of 106 male homosexuals who received psychoanalytic treatment, 27% achieved a heterosexual orientation. The Academy concurs with Dr. Bieber's conclusion that these results "argue in favor of a more optimistic outlook than is held by others."

Citing a widespread need and desire for proper and authoritative sex education, the Academy deplors the contradictory views on the subject that hold sway. "Whereas America seems to have a preoccupation with sex as a symbol, examination of this preoccupation reveals a superficial, immature, and artificial attitude toward sex. But when attempts are made to have society become more mature on this subject, a surprising resistance arises.

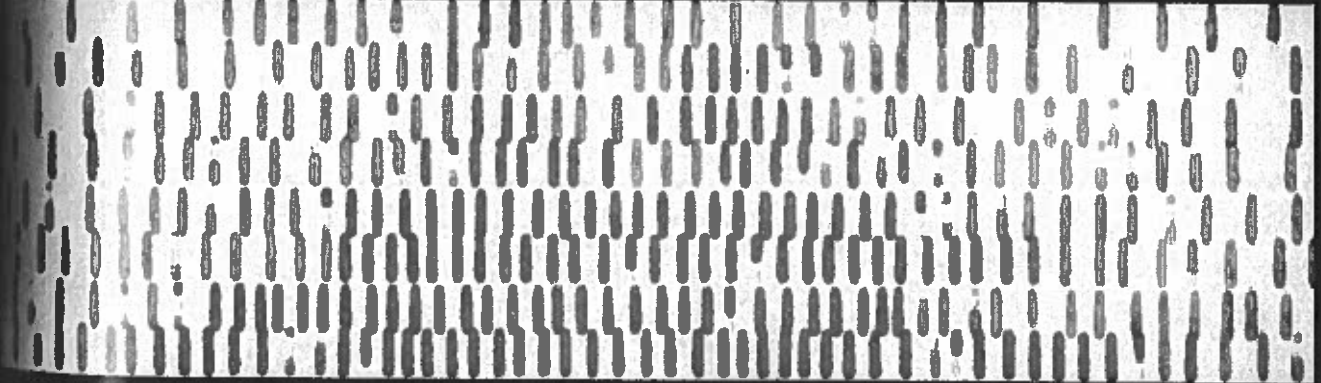
"The argument most commonly advanced is that sex education belongs in the home. But if the home is not providing it, where will it be given?" ■



Data from Bieber and associates, *Homosexuality*, Basic Books, 1962.

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