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HEIKE MELZER. 2018. *Scharfstellung. Die neue sexuelle Revolution. Stuttgart: Tropen Sachbuch, pp. 236. ISBN 978-3-608-50356-2.*

The German publishing house Tropen Sachbuch, based in Stuttgart, published an interesting book in 2018 on the new challenges associated with sexual behaviour written by a neurologist, psychotherapist and business-coach, Heike Melzer. She is the head of a practice for couples and sexual therapy in Munich and for more than 25 years has helped people with their problems in the field of sexuality and relationships. *Scharfstellung. Die neue sexuelle Revolution – Focusing. The new sexual Revolution* is her first book which has been written on the basis of experience and practice from many conversations with clients and couples in psychotherapy practice. The book deals with the different sides of sexuality, intimacy, emotions and the erotic and its goal is not to value their ethical or political correctness, their good and bad sides but instead to focus on problems with sexuality in the contemporary world. On this basis, the reader with autonomy and self-responsibility taken into account, should decide what it means for them to fulfil a satisfactory sex life. It is the intention of the author of this book to use her observational skills in order to improve the views of the readers of the texts about unknown problems or even unconscious ones. The book has a rather general catch-all character to it and does not even contain any footnotes. Instead it actually shows problems based on experience with a lot of real examples. This means that the contents can be understood easily and convincingly. Moreover, the simple, vivid and partly humorous language adds to the overall persuasiveness of the topic being explored. The book is composed of ten chapters and the eleventh contains some bibliographical and web-sites references.

The main part of the book focuses on a description of behaviour in the field of sexuality in the contemporary world. The author begins by focusing on mastur-

bation which in relation to intimacy and behaviour has nowadays become a part of public character and is connected with the sexualisation of society. The next area of concern is pornography. Melzer depicts a short history of pornography and the impact of the Internet and on challenges of this phenomenon and stresses that the space for voyeurs and exhibitionists is the Internet. The problem of pornography is addressed in other places in the book. The other behaviour described in Melzer's book is the use of sex toys. She highlights three trends: that new target groups are women and couples, firms have modern distributions systems and marketing strategies, and that new high-tech-products offer exceptional levels of stimulation. An extensive chapter is dedicated to prostitution. Melzer speaks about "love for sale" through the ages, she shows some examples of prostitution practices in Germany, and makes connections between prostitution and the Internet, the reasons and background of prostitution and legalization of prostitution and the problems connected with it. At the end of this chapter Melzer mentions a new trend in the field of prostitution: the sex doll-brothels and animal-brothels and ends with the sentence: *Herzlich willkommen in Sodom und Gomorra!* ("Welcome to Sodom and Gomorra!"). The last phenomenon of sexual behaviour nowadays is casual dating which is described as a pleasure without any burdens. The author speaks about motives, and the kinds of risks related to this sexual activity especially in relation to monogamy. Sex without a strong partnership and without any ties to live-in-partnerships can easily be found nowadays, it can be planned and lived. The Internet portals and Apps work as a catalyst to accelerate the process. In all of the depicted problems, the Internet plays one of the biggest roles nowadays in relation to sexual behaviour.

The next three chapters focus on the important observations of sexual behaviour made by the experience of Melzer and her practice of delivering therapy for sexual dysfunctions and highlights the consequences of the problems depicted in the preceding part of her book. The first discusses the process of change in sexuality. Melzer writes about changes to and trouble with sexual functions such as listlessness, impotency and a delayed or absent orgasm. From the perspective of the quantity of changes there is a deeper rift between the "sexually untouched" persons and promiscuous people. The change in sexual behaviour is accounted for because of the liberalization of sexual preferences like fetishism, exhibitionism, voyeurism and sadomasochism. An extensive chapter of the book is concerned with the problem of sexual addiction and addiction to pornography. There is a discussion about the symptoms of this kind of behavioural addiction, about neurological foundations and a connection is made with the functioning of the reward system in the brain. The author exactly describes three stages to the evolution of sexual

addiction: sensitization, desensitization and the loss of influence of the brain so that the addicted person cannot stop continuing a very dangerous type of behaviour. The book contains some brief remarks on therapeutic help for sexual addiction and about isolation from additional remedies, the extension of friendships and hobbies, the definition of new life goals, the forming of self-help-groups like “Anonym sex addicted”, and hypnotherapy. The problem of sexual behaviour nowadays is the influence of sex education. Children discover sexuality in different ways than in the past and are endangered by the consumption of pornography which has negative consequences. The Internet delivers content to children about which they do not speak with their parents or teachers. Moreover, the dialogue shared by parents and teachers with young people on sexuality, partnership and types of risky behaviour is necessary. It can help them to take a responsible attitude to their life.

At the end of *Scharfstellung. Die neue sexuelle Revolution* Melzer compares the libido with an appetite for food consumption and for false eating habits with the behavioural risks encounter in sex lives. Melzer postulates and focuses on the spreading of well-founded knowledge concerning functions, opportunities and risk in the field of sexual activity. Due to changes – in the new sexual revolution – people should consider values which are central to their life: family, partnership, attention to children, respect associated with their own borders and the borders of others, their curiosity and their openness to contradictions in life and their self-responsibility. The book is not a simple description of a new phenomenon in the field of sexuality nor operating instructions in how to handle the new possibilities and trends. Instead, it is a reflection on the nature, the functions and the risks of sexuality in the contemporary world dominated by a world of rapid communication. The book, which has arisen on the basis of practice and experience, brings a founded knowledge, and with its examples and simple and vivid language makes it an understanding and convincing read.

