

The Magic of LIFE

Dr Rodney Syme: ‘A personal biography/love story
— with a message for all ages’

Marriage Guidance President: ‘All life is
relationship and relationship is life. As we relate
to one another so we live...’

**Front cover and illustrations by
Australian bird artist Paul Margocsy**

“Old and stupid” poem by Jim Searle
Newspaper excerpts: *Melbourne Sun/Herald*,
Adelaide Advertiser, *Brisbane Courier Mail*,
The West Australian.

‘Explicit’ these days is sometimes used as a dirty word — its actual dictionary meaning being ‘with clear understanding’. Parts of this story are explicit — being a clear understanding true account of real life personal affairs as they were related to me. Some names have been changed to protect the privacy of those generous enough to share with us their valuable and revealing intimate experiences.

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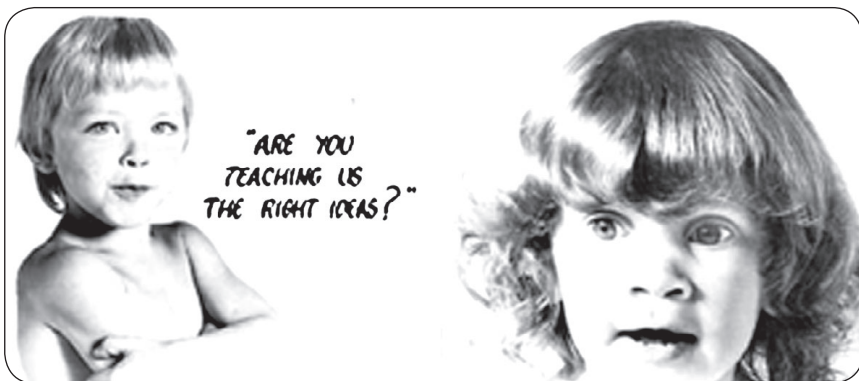
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*FOREWORD by grandchildren Justin and Sascha,
photographed by their father Rob Turner.*

INTRODUCTION

Psychologist Tony Vickers-Willis: Our attitudes determine our feelings. Jim had the remarkable experience of being a polio patient living within the confines of the iron lung, and escaping from it. He says ‘your head sticks out in the fresh air; your body is locked inside; if a fly lands on your nose you can’t knock it off or even scratch it. You’re alive but very restricted in what you can enjoy, to say the least’.

In his 30-year investigative journalist survey of community attitudes towards relationships and sexuality, he says he found many men and women living their lives as if they were confined in an iron lung – living by obstructive and restrictive attitudes and ideas passed forward from earlier generations, attitudes which robbed them of some of the magic of life nature had intended them to enjoy.

In conveying his message about what he calls ‘psychological circumcision’ contributing, amongst other things, to our present divorce dilemma, Jim opens up his own extraordinary life

experiences – some illustrated by newspaper cuttings – ranging from the freedom of doing aerobatics among the clouds in a Spitfire to imprisonment in the iron lung; from incursions into nudist camps, and what they revealed, to the nationwide uproar as he promoted the feature-length sex education film ‘The Language of Love’. His strong efforts to encourage more positive and constructive attitudes towards sexuality, plus his 40-years anti-smoking campaign, tested the popularity he had built up as an entertainer.

Jim shares his own experience as he found himself on a steep learning curve regarding sex. He told me he was glad that, after so many years of research/interviewing, public speaking and writing about this subject, he was still enthusiastic enough to feel that what he had learnt and passed on could help some people improve those marriage odds and allow something more to begin in their life.

He felt that – although recent generations in our society had ‘changed gear’ in some attitudes towards sex – the most important change urgently needed, especially by our young, was still missing; that the three solutions suggested in the pages ahead would make a difference – help partners to have compassion and understanding of each other’s attitudes and resulting feelings; and that, with new and better attitudes, the genie could grant their wishes and turn on the magic.

Tony Vickers-Willis, MBA, M.A.Ps. S

CHAPTER 1:

A EC

CA ED E

It was a quiet mild afternoon in March 1970: The boys and I were playing table tennis on our kitchen table, a billiard table with a Laminex top, in the kitchen of our 100-year-old home at Brighton Beach, Victoria (Australia). This table had been the scene of so much family fun – crazy table tennis with my wife, Beth, and our children and friends tearing around the kitchen; billiard and snooker contests with crowds of the children's friends...

Canterbury Place: A narrow, quaint little cul-de-sac – old houses close to the footpath, gum trees, Oleanders, Castor Oil trees; one of Brighton's oldest streets. Our home – a Victorian villa, hand-made bricks with cement rendering, just one back from the seafront. Heaven!



I kept glancing out of the window watching for Beth's car to return. My wife, whom I adored – at 42, still just as slim and beautiful and gorgeous as the day I married her – had gone off at lunchtime in the old Vanguard which was our second family car, and in which the children, one by one, were learning to drive. I kept on glancing out of the window.

At last our part-Aboriginal foster daughter, Merle, could stand it no longer: 'there's a note for you in the bedroom Jim', she said.

I did not comprehend.

Then I noticed there were tears in Merle's eyes: I had a sudden feeling of fear:

'What do you mean – a note?' I asked.

I flew up to the bedroom. There it was on the pillow, a note from Beth: She was leaving me; had left.

In recent years when people have rung me up, as they did almost every day for years, when husbands or wives had left them, or perhaps they were thinking of committing suicide, I have said: – 'I know how you feel'. Often they've replied 'Oh, you couldn't possibly, Mr. Vickers-Willis', and I've said: 'yes, you feel as though someone has stuck a knife in your stomach and is turning it around'.

At that moment all I knew was a tremendous shock – followed by an amazing amount of actual pain, which went on and on.

She was just the sort of girl I had always wanted: one of the bobby-sox brigade of the early 1940s who loved Sinatra and swing, mixed with a little jitterbug – although they enjoyed this mostly at private parties at home, being too worried that they would be 'typed' if they jitterbugged in the big public dance halls. Like many a young RAAF airman, I always wanted to

get close to one of those bouncing, bubbly young bobby-soxers – and I did!

But she was also very serious, full of common sense and fun, and sexy, with a charm which made me always comfortable and relaxed when she was around meeting my friends.

Long black hair, huge brown eyes, and a gorgeous little feminine figure – who danced like a feather to Glenn Miller, Tommy Dorsey and Harry James, who were her favourites – natural dancing talents later to be very valuable in our big square dancing promotion.

When I first took her out, I would get her out of the house as quickly as I could, otherwise the 'phone would ring all night – young males wanting to chat to her or take her out, or some such. I would finish up talking all night with her mother or her sister if we stayed at home! In the face of all this competition, I did not quite know why Beth went for me – although I had the advantage of being an Air Force pilot Flight Lieutenant, nine years older – dressed in what used to be known as 'passionate purple'. I think she considered me 'sophisticated' (which I certainly wasn't).

When courting her, I would put bunches of flowers outside the door of Dr Hearman's dental surgery where Beth was a nurse – pressing the bell and hiding around the lift-well: When Beth came out to greet the 'client', pouncing on her, and getting a kiss – which Beth named 'Jim's flower trap'.

When we were married at Christ Church, South Yarra (Melbourne), I ate two dozen oysters for lunch – because I had heard these were good for top performance on the wedding night.

Beth and I had been through much – the usual struggles of young married couples added to by two children who made medical history and, between them, had to have no less than 16

operations; being at the centre of what was probably the world's biggest square dance boom; polio, the iron lung, etc. I would have felt that our 23-year-old marriage had survived such buffeting that it was invulnerable. And now she was gone.

For the next three nights I did not sleep at all. I paced up and down alone in our bedroom in the early hours of the morning cursing myself – not knowing really what to curse: Would she ever come back? Where had I gone wrong...?

Like so many young ones, I hadn't a clue. At the time there were literally thousands of dance people who knew us and saw us working publicly together as a couple – apparently totally supportive of one another – who would have been astonished to know that there were serious cracks in our relationship.

I expect some who have had their marriage partner leave them (year 2002 Australian statistics – 100,000 new marriages and 50,000 divorces) may relate to the distress which for me, after 23 years of marriage, was worse than when I woke up in the iron lung.

No wonder I forged ahead in my efforts to write a book about sex and relationship attitudes. I had already started it and this was part of our difficulties. I could see our problems developing and became very interested in finding some answers.

At that time we didn't have an inkling about what we had learned in our growing up days – some of which now needed to be unlearned; about how we were selling ourselves short; about the myths, the expectations, the 'psychological circumcision' we had received as part of a standard upbringing in our society. At the time we were quite blind to our unhelpful built-in attitudes which were bound to rob us of much of the warmth, joy and comfort – the magic – available in our partnership, particularly in our sex life.

As questioned by our grandchildren in the Foreword, the problem was what had been taught to us (maybe to you, too) in our younger years – often by those who loved us the most?

Subsequently, the dynamic real-life information generously provided by many men and women in this book – including some badly hurt people and some whose breathtakingly simple wisdom is included in the pages ahead – led me to feel that the automatic passing on of negative attitudes which were suited to the past *was more deadly destructive in today's partner/marriage environment than such things as pornography* (see “bonsaing our children” – Chapter 19).

In a video program made in 1981, in answer to a question about female circumcision as practised in some Asian and African societies, I said I felt that we in our culture did similar damage to young men and women – only we did it psychologically and it was not so easy to recognise.

As it is easier to observe in the physical context, let's for a start go to Kenya, in a different culture, and have a look...

‘Yes’ said the confident tousle-haired youngish/middle aged man. ‘My wife does what I tell her – and my daughter does what my wife tells her’. It warned us of the horrors to come.

This was the main street of a small village in Kenya – little more than a wide dusty track flanked by homes which were shanty-type wooden buildings, cows and children roaming the street, bedraggled, ill-dressed people; women, some in burqas completely hidden, with mesh covering their eyes and skirts down to their ankles; beyond the huts, fields, some green but mostly red dirt; wide blue skies and, in the distance, glorious tree-capped mountain ranges – leaving one with the feeling of

being in an oasis of poverty. One of our party described the Kenyan village as 'like a big disaster backyard'.

The filmmaker (Kim Longiotto – a specialist in documentaries on women of ignored and hidden cultures) said she 'felt like a monster'. The person who organised the filmmakers' access to the female circumcision begged her not to intervene no matter how dreadful it was. By being there, she explained, the presence of the film crew ensured that the cut chosen was the least extreme that would be acceptable and that an anaesthetic would be used. If the filmmakers tried to stop the procedure, the girls would certainly undergo something far worse later on.

Inside the rough wooden hut, a 10-year-old girl was laid on the floor, her skirts pulled up.

It was customary for mothers and aunts to hold the girls down – and so it was in this case as the little girl started to struggle.

It was also customary for the older women to laugh at the girls as they screamed because stoicism was considered important and they had to learn that a woman's life was full of pain.

So it was in this case as the little girl screamed 'don't inject my bum, don't do it, don't do it'. The old woman with the razor mutilated her clitoris and sewed up the lips of her vagina while the older women of her family held her down as she screamed at the top of her voice.

Sitting on the bench watching all this was her younger sister looking terribly frightened. It was her turn next.

When the cutting and sewing was finished, the first girl was lifted to her feet and on to the bench.

Her younger sister was grabbed, pushed down onto the ground and her skirt raised.

The same procedure, but this time the younger sister screamed throughout the cutting 'You're killing me, you're killing me'. The older women held her firmly as she struggled and screamed at the top of her voice while the cutting of her clitoris and stitching of her vagina went on.

Next day the filmmaker was invited to make a film of the girls receiving some presents and saying how glad they were that they were now, as they saw it, 'complete women'.

In Kenya, clitoridectomy – which a magazine article named 'mutilation by tradition' – is officially banned, but this law is rarely enforced and it is estimated there are more than 100 million women in the world carrying this mutilation. Girls who refuse to have it done are effectively deciding to be outcasts. They face quite a lonely life outside their families and outside their communities.

As this book makes comparisons between what goes for young ones in our own society and our horror of little girls being held down while old women mutilate them with a razor, let's have a look at the *motivations* and the *results*

First of all, what motivates the older women, the mothers and aunts, who are, after all, the children's most loved and trusted relatives?

Is it, first and foremost, that they want their children *to be like them*; as part of this, they want them to not enjoy sex more than they did (does it upset some adults and make them feel inadequate when their children get more out of it than they did in their life?); they want them to fit in and be ready to conform to the customary requirements in their society?

Sound familiar?

We heard older Kenyan women talk – some of them being against clitoridectomy, while many others supported it and even carried it out. You heard them speak of a woman's clitoris as 'the dirty thing hanging down'

And the results? First and foremost the reduction of happiness in life for each girl because of the removal of something which nature intended to provide her with the joy and the magic of sexual expression; the terrible result of having sex for the first time and of women attempting to give birth through a web of scar tissue.

In the film we saw a young bride offered an operation under anaesthetic to 're-open' her vagina for intercourse – and her young husband refusing this and saying he would become a laughing stock among his friends, adding 'I'd rather do it myself'.

And the constant religious obsession with virginity, the men expecting their brides to be circumcised – their guarantee that they would be marrying a virgin; that their wife would be faithful no matter how happy or unhappy they were in their marriage

In Jogjakarta in Central Java, I was talking to a well-educated Asian male about the fact that in Asia and Africa more than 100 million little girls had their clitorises mutilated (circumcision) and would miss out on enjoying sex the same way their mothers and grand-mothers had – to make them faithful wives for their husbands.

He replied: 'this practice is carried out according to our beliefs and traditions. If this is not done to a woman when she is a little girl, she suffers from ill-health in later life'.

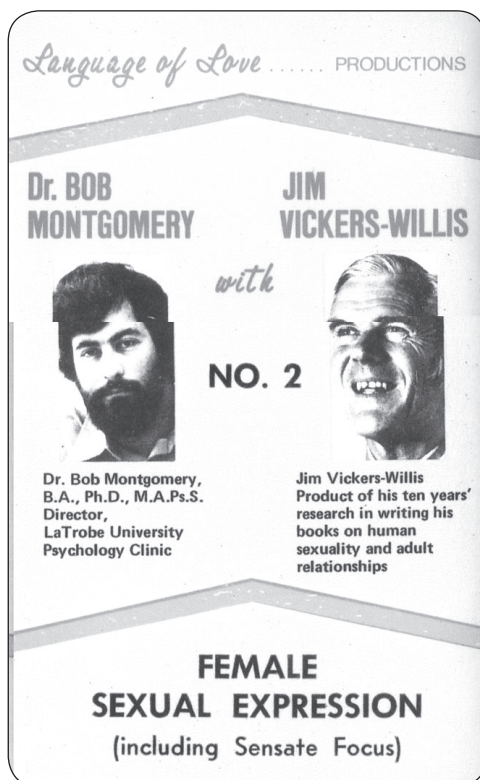
When I tried to argue the matter further, he broke away and

was looking over his shoulder fearfully, worried that someone might overhear him discussing this forbidden matter

The video program, 'Report on sexuality in our community', which I made in 1981 followed 15 years in which I had started off by reading about 25 sex education books (some of which were banned), interviewing masses of people, speaking at numerous seminars etc; later promoting what I considered at the time to be the world's greatest sex education film – and writing scripts for its sequel.

I made the video program because I was worried that all that I had learned would be lost. I felt I was on to something of dynamic importance and hoped I would have enough ability to convey it to others; I started to become aware of a deadly hidden *love and marriage destroyer* – about which most people appeared oblivious – as I interviewed one after another couple troubled by relationship problems.

A distinguished psychologist (Dr Bob Montgomery), who at time of writing is Head of the Psychology Dept at Canberra University, and I jointly produced three sex therapy cassettes – "Sexuality – and Your Quality of Life", "Female Sexual Expression" and "Male Sexuality". However, people fell asleep listening to the droning voices so we interspersed our sex talks with "cameos" of cases we had encountered and often recorded, so that we were able to present the actual word description of the people involved.



These cameos were clearly real life; not just us talking. We got actors and actresses to play the parts. We found people listened and understood what we were talking about better because they could relate to these real life cameos.

An early interview produced this first Cameo about a case which I followed for years –

THE VICAR'S DAUGHTER

Dinnertime at the Vicar's house was a happy family time, Mother dishing up and Dad carving; a much loved and respected couple who looked after their congregation and were the leaders in charitable efforts, they had three daughters, the eldest of whom, Prudence, a very pretty blonde, arrived late. As she took her place at the table, the youngest sister quipped that she was putting on weight.

Then out came the awful truth: Prudence confessed that she was pregnant.

Consternation. The younger girls were told to finish their meal and sent to their rooms. There followed a round table discussion. The Vicar and his wife, when they calmed down, spoke quite kindly. The harshest thing they said to Prudence was "that they had trusted her, and she had let them down".

It was 1971 when abortion was not a ready option even if the parents had agreed to it. Prudence, a late teenager with boyfriend Bill of similar age, had never had any instruction about contraceptives from her parents and had not used any. He, too, said that "sex was never talked about" in his home. The couple said they "had sex" on two occasions, with him "going in" – but he had never completed the act inside her. It had all been "rather disastrous" and, a month ago, the couple had decided they were not compatible and had ended their relationship. He now had another girlfriend.

The Vicar and his wife arranged to see the other parents. The two sets of parents got together, decided it should all be "hushed up" to save their good name from disgrace, and arranged a quick wedding. The bride by mistake left her baby knitting in the wedding car. The young husband was not financially ready to get married so the parents lent them money to

get a unit (sound familiar?)... This Cameo continues later in this story. . .

HULA IN THE NUDE

A City hotel – the scene for Real Life Cameo No 2:
the soft light from the hotel room reading lamps accentuated her graceful thighs and hips, her firm breasts, with nipples erect in excitement, her beautiful long blonde hair flying as she danced naked for her lover.

It was all nice and naughty, exciting and guilty. Pam had always admired him – married to one of her best friends and now separated. David had shown interest in her, too. They had just had an enjoyable dinner with much wine and a dance, in the restaurant downstairs. She liked his dancing; it was different. She had enjoyed dancing with her husband, Bob, when they first met, but he had never changed his style and she now found it somewhat boring.

The atmosphere was warming up fast as she danced naked in their hotel room, moving her hips, bottom and breasts sensuously to the music – which turned him on, and her too.

Soon he could stand it no longer, was on his feet lifting her – she laughing and pretending to struggle.

He carried her into the bedroom, laid her on the bed and then very tenderly and lovingly started to make love to her.

His gentleness surprised and excited her. His hand went to the mound between her legs. His sensitive fingers gently caressed around her clitoris, never touching it but describing an arc ‘from ten o’clock to 2 o’clock’ over it, which set her moaning with pleasure. She reached for his penis and found it beautifully hard – much better than Bob who was 10 years older and sometimes half soft and not so easy to enjoy.

Soon they were locked together, their bodies writhing and responding in the ecstasy of mutual sex, her cries of pleasure being matched by his satisfied grunts as he thrust in and out, then pushed his penis in as hard as he could.

A pause – then the magic as they lay back and lovingly and tenderly caressed and appreciated each other after their love-making.

(The sort of honest presentation of natural and tender love-making in that last paragraph is what I now believe needs to be shown on television and in films everywhere for young and old – instead of the cheapskate unnatural “nasties” such as rape and so called “simulated sex” and “so porn” situations which brainwash the young ones into treating sex cheaply, thus robbing themselves of the real magic available. See chapter 11 – “censoring the censor”).

Pam said afterwards: “My mother was right; I should never have married Bob.”

However, after a couple more dalliances, David went back to his wife and family.

I asked Pam had she ever done hulas in the nude in the bedroom with her husband Bob. Her reply: “Oh no; nothing like that”. In her marriage bedroom she acted “respectably”.

Hearing about this type of situation so regularly, I began to ask ‘why’ – and some answers are in Chapter 15 ‘Teaching Guilt’. In the same chapter: How Pam and her husband Bob were getting on when I met them much later. . .

I started to look on several things differently.

I found I was out of step with some current accepted beliefs about such things as paedophilia: It was so easy to blame

pornography and the internet, to arrest people, cause a news-worthy sensation and cause suicides. I started to ask 'is no-one interested in the real human causes and solutions?'

I began to consider that to protect children from paedophilia, we had to get away from teaching fear, guilt and shame regarding sex – recognising that paedophilia was found in greater numbers in sexually repressive environments; that we needed to teach our young ones to be confident in their sexuality – a sexually wise and confident child being less likely to be a victim and also less likely to grow up to be a perpetrator. It was a starting point.

These days I look back and realise that one of the reasons I had such incredible success in the great Australian square dancing boom, particularly in Melbourne, was that I was such a complete mug 'caller' to start with. I had only just learnt to square dance myself and felt it was something good – worth learning and passing on.

So, in my early square dance promotional radio programs, when we were building up the numbers of dancers, I knew very few square dances and, when I had 'called' them, I just did them over again! Consequently, I made the dancing very easy – because I didn't know any better; I didn't know any of the complicated stuff! As a result we had remarkable success with scores of thousands of people able to join in the simple dancing very easily – clapping, stamping, relaxing and thoroughly enjoying themselves.

Now, in this present subject, I hope that my own original obvious basic ignorance might once more be a key in helping others to 'join in', relate to and gain from what a typical young male ignoramus journalist like me gradually discovered in life experience and in this 30-odd years of reporter-style personal sexual research.

CHAPTER 2:

F E A D A

In my own upbringing, I look back and realize that my father (called Pa) was a very strong and definite father figure: He made one feel that he naturally expected the best from you – so you did your best.

He played the piano and taught us all to sing with him around the piano. As a result, all the children were musical. He was a father who always seemed to find time to fly a kite, play quoits, or organize games of indoor bowls with visitors and the children, etc.

Mother and Dad would have found it difficult to accept my later interest in sexual education. I sometimes think they died just in time – it was in 1961 and within four weeks of each other.

"THE BEST TWENTY POUNDS"

We travelled to Australia as migrants in 1925 – sponsored by the Australian Government so that we only paid ten pounds per adult (children free) for the boat trip. The best twenty pounds our family ever spent.

In London, my father, Pa (John Vickers-Willis), who was in partnership with a lady named Rawson in a furnishing architect business "Vickers/Rawson" in Piccadilly, was something of a man-about-town. Amongst his 'jobs' was furnishing the lobby of the Savoy Hotel. He was said at one time to have shared an actress girlfriend with the Prince of Wales, drove the latest Singer car (1924) in which he delighted us kids by speeding up over the "switchbacks" (bridges and bumps in the road) so that we would fly off our seats in the dicky-seat. Here he is driving us -



There were many stories about Pa, who was a dyed-in-the-wool Englishman: At one time in a London crowd he was said to have reached forward with his umbrella, when a man in front failed to take his hat off as the Queen went past, removing the man's hat and handing it to him on the brolly saying 'The Queen you know old chap'.

Pa, a well-built six-footer, a fresh-air man, set up a hammock attached to a chimney to sleep on the roof during a 'hot spell'

when living in London. He always had us young ones sleeping in sleep-outs to help develop strong lungs – something which stood me in good stead later when I had polio and was fighting to get out of the iron lung.

Mother, whom we called Moppy, came from an upmarket family – her father, Horace Whitcomb, being the editor of the Economist newspaper in London and owner of the Saturday Review newspaper. Moppy's nephew, Noel Whitcomb, was also a big time London journalist. Their beautiful home in Edge-warebury Lane now has Fairview Rise named after it. Before leaving England, in 1925, we lived in a three-storey home near the corner of Marsh Lane, in Stanmore. Our house, named 'Hardwick', has been pulled down in the last 20 years and 'Hardwick Close' established, with a number of comfortable modern apartments.



Beth, Jim and son Peter visiting Hardwick before it was demolished.

It was Grandpa Whitcomb who inspired my ambition to become a journalist. I started off as a copyboy on the Melbourne Sun, at one pound (\$2) per week, and, after much trying and many disappointments, finally got a journalist cadetship when I took on the job of editing an Army paper and sent copies down to the Sun Management for their inspection. The literary

tradition has gone on: my sister's daughter Mary and her husband now own a local magazine in Australia and my brother's daughter Robyn is just having her second book published; grandchildren are showing literary ability at school.

We were a family of 'Poms', who migrated to Australia bringing two huge packing cases of beautiful furniture, with J.V.W. (My father's initials) printed on the side. We travelled in a migrant ship called the 'Baradine' and knew it as the 'gristle boat' – which was our comment on the food.

As we left England, the crocuses had come out, followed by the daffodils and the tulips and the bluebells, for which we often hunted in the woods as little kids. Now this English life was behind us. Dad had us all sleeping on deck when we hit our first tropical region.

Mother – pretty, petite with dark wavy hair and fresh English cheeks; sister Joan, a lanky-legged ten-year-old – not yet blossomed into her later Marlene Dietrich looks; Chas, age four, and Jim almost seven.

Dad put his money into an Australian furnishing firm of which he was to be a director, but the firm went broke as soon as we arrived, Pa had to seek a job – and then came the Depression.

When we arrived at Middle Brighton – now one of Melbourne's smartest shopping centres – there were four horse-drawn Hansom Cab "taxis" parked on the cobblestones outside the railway station. These would gallop you home for, I think, sixpence (5 cents). That was 1925.

Mother and Dad never appeared to get much out of their sexuality and, in fact, Dad on one occasion told me: 'The world would be a better place without sex'. No wonder he felt bad about it: he had had to repress his urges, while sleeping in a

separate bedroom, for about 40 years. No wonder that Dad became a philosophical man!

As well as my sister and brother, in our family there were two elder brothers, Eric and Les (Bill) – but they were sons by Dad's first marriage. His first wife had died of tuberculosis – and Dad, (believing what was written about sex and t/b by a widely-accepted London medical 'sex expert' of the last century) thought that he had killed her by having sex with her too often. I think that Dad believed this 'medical' rubbish until the day he died. It makes me mad when I think about it, and about the harm which has been done to millions – and is still done – by this type of misinformation and ignorance about sexuality

Other than sexually, my parents were a close couple: Mother was very loving and devoted to us children as we grew up, and, although they had some tempestuous and difficult times, which no doubt were contributed to by their hopeless sexual relationship, nonetheless I remember them both as real and enterprising personalities in their own right.

Mother's attitude towards sex was quite clear cut: she had seven sisters and brothers and she said that her mother was practically never out of hospital or looking after a new baby – and she wasn't going to be like that.

Condoms were available but, as far as I know, were never used by Mother and Dad. Condoms were rudely called 'French Letters' (I was told the French called them 'English Letters') and in those times most people like us considered that they were only used by 'dirty' people, certainly not by respectable husbands and wives!

It was a shame about their sexual relationship because in so many other ways they got on very well.

Four weeks before Dad died at the age of 76 and eight

weeks before Mother died at the age of 70, at 10 o'clock on a cold autumn night I was driving down tree-lined Were Street, Brighton, near my home, when I saw our nephew six-foot-three Charles Wallace striding along in the darkness. I drove around the corner and there were Ma and Pa arm-in-arm walking fast along secluded Wolseley Grove. I pulled up the car and said 'What's going on?'

Pa replied: 'Can't stop old chap; we're racing young Charles (their grandson) round the block!' Ten o'clock on a cold Autumn night. It was typical.

"ARMY BASIC TRAINING" IN SEX

At the start of the second world war, I did compulsory basic training in the Army, while waiting for my Air Force place, and received my first sex education in the back of buses going back to camp on Sunday nights – by listening to the dirty songs being sung. I thought they were positively filthy, and had only a vague idea of what some of the words were about.

One man in our tent used to tell us amazing stories of his love life every time he returned from weekend leave: he would tell of 'knocking her off' six times in succession on Saturday night.

Everyone seemed to have a big penis and I looked at mine and thought it looked miserably small. There were many jokes about penises. I grew up with the idea that I would be far too small to satisfy any reasonable size woman. I cannot help wondering if this was why I usually tended to pick smaller girls when I developed love affairs a little later on.

I now also wonder if this might be an underlying cause of some paedophile activity; why some men like to have sex with children – maybe considering they will be sexually adequate for

a small child and not adequate for a larger adult. If so, should we be having a second look at these jokes (and myths) about penis size?

SO, WHAT ARE SOME OF THESE SEXUAL MYTHS?

My interviews and research caused me in the pages ahead to ask some big questions about sexual myths, including this initial one about four letter words:

I was a pure and innocent (read totally ignorant) young man of my day who was so well brought up by my English parents that I would practically never even say 'damn'. My war-time ambition was to fly a Spitfire, which I eventually did. Before that I had a stint as a flying instructor, teaching Fleet Air Arm pilots.

One day, instructing from the back seat of a Harvard aircraft, with a big pupil sitting in front of me and a big radial engine obscuring my view, we were practising low flying and he was heading straight for a tree. The pupil had frozen on the controls. I saw the tree at the last minute, flicked up the wing, the tree went underneath, I flicked it down again. We were saved.

'You c...!' I screamed over the intercom at my hapless pupil.

I never knew where that word came from; I had never said it before; I'd never even thought about it.

But in my moment of crisis that was the filthiest word an 'innocent' young man could find – the word for a woman's vagina.

How come so often we ignore the slurs on womanhood and on the great life force sex?

One of the Australian cricketers was punished – after he was run out and exploded with the words 'black c...s'. The

punishment was because he used the word 'black' – regarded as a slur on the black cricketers he was playing against.

The fact that the other derogatory word referred to a woman's vagina, in the way that suggested it was the lowest of the low, was not questioned.

How have we all become so blind that we can accept slurs like this reducing respect for womanhood? That we can accept a further slur on all sex when we make an ultimate dirty word that famous four-letter one beginning with f... ? I don't even print it here for fear of offending some readers and also for fear of censorship.

When I helped to promote the great sex education film 'The Language of Love', I agreed to do all the national television advertisements without any charge provided they allowed me to write my own scripts.

In one advertisement I used to look straight into the television camera and say 'I'm about to say the most obscene four letter word you have ever heard'.

I would pause, knowing that the engineer in the studio would likely have his finger on the button to buzz me out if necessary.

Then I would say 'kill'.

I would add 'Can you think of anything more obscene than one person killing another person?'

'I can say that word 'kill' quite freely on television, but another four letter word which describes one person being kind and loving towards another person, I cannot say that word on television because it is regarded as obscene. That's what's wrong.'

NOT THE MISSIONARY POSITION

Artist Paul Margocsy suggests we could substitute some nasty word like drugs as a basis for our four letter obscene word

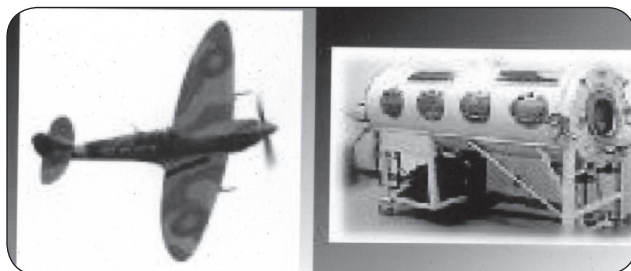


I was terribly keen on tennis (my brother Charlie was schoolboy champion of Victoria just before the War) and, although I know my father made a manful effort to give me some information about sex (as far as he knew himself), I believed that an ejaculation tired you out. Therefore, when booked for an important tennis match, I used to pray that I would not have a wet dream during the night before. Of course, then I would usually have one – and I would lose my final because I was tired!

This carried on into my marriage, and when I had intercourse

with my wife in my early marriage, I would be absolutely exhausted on the following morning – and she would have to get up and make me a cup of tea in bed. Now, of course, since getting into sex education, I have found out that sex is good for you and makes you more fit and full of vim – so this has ruined the whole situation: I have to get up and give my wife a cup of tea!

When the Battle of Britain was on, we were hearing about the small handful of heroes battling off the German armadas. I didn't want to kill or be killed, but the Air Force seemed pretty romantic stuff – and I think I firmed up my idea of joining the R.A.A.F. after we had made our first 16-mile route march in the Army (before breakfast!) I also felt that when the first enemy charged at me with a bayonet, I would turn and run. Fighting up in the heavens seemed much cleaner; also I wanted to fly a Spitfire.



Little did I know the contrast ahead – the incredible freedom of doing aerobatics among the clouds and the imprisonment of living with polio in the confines of the iron lung. Also, I was about to start on a steep learning curve regarding sex. . .

UPRIGHT SEX

While overseas during the War – at an Air Force Officers' Mess dance – I met a special girl.

She really introduced me to sex – to the delights of the vagina – in the back seat of my Model A Ford car in mid-winter, with snow on the ground. I did not know quite what to make of it, but she guided me along.

A lovely, graceful girl, she belonged to a beautiful family and I had some wonderful times. We two, very guiltily, would stand in a doorway at the front of her house with my penis just inside her vagina while we kissed and cuddled for hours. When I reached the point of ejaculation, I would withdraw it smartly.

This was my introduction to coitus interruptus, although I didn't know it at the time. We never completed the act. Probably this fact had something to do with my later premature ejaculation problems in early marriage.

We used no contraceptives, and, in fact, we knew virtually nothing about anything. All we knew was that we liked each other, and we enjoyed our intimacies.

I often wondered why I did not get her pregnant, until, of course, in sexual education I found that standing up in this way was a less likely position to make a girl conceive, and that she was most likely to be impregnated when lying on her back.

Much later I started to wonder is this the reason why certain religious and other authorities have insisted that the only “decent” and non-sinful way to have sex is for the woman to lie on her back and the man to be on top? Have they wanted their adherents to produce as many babies as possible, thus strengthening their religion, or whatever else it was they were pushing?

No wonder some natives laughingly called this ‘the

missionary position' and in psychological circles to this day it is still so known.

The ridiculousness of all this – the difficulties, stress, and unhappiness which it has forced on millions of people quite unnecessarily – was not apparent to me in my youth.

Only since I've been involved in sexual education have I realized that the quite wicked ideas which limit people in their sexual expression – such as believing that oral sex is dirty, or many other positions for having sexual intercourse are unacceptable or even obscene – are a major cause of a vast amount of impotence and sexual disappointment suffered by millions of men and women.

One can quickly see that belief in the need for a big strong erection causes performance pressure in men, and can contribute to their impotence. Of course they believe they must have a big erection: if the only way they are allowed to make love is with the man lying on top of the woman, a good strong erection is absolutely essential! I found that that belief is really damaging – but many still do not know this and there are still those who keep insisting there is some virtue in unnatural restrictions.

It is interesting to look back now and realise that probably the only reason I did not get that charming girl pregnant – which undoubtedly would have changed my whole life and hers too – was that the only safe place we could find for our guilty activity was a little corner by her front door; if anyone approached, she could quickly drop her skirt and we were just standing there cuddling each other innocently! She was a sweetie, but our subsequent wartime experiences showed that we were not ready for marriage. In fact, when I was posted away by the Air Force to fly the fastest aircraft in the world, Mosquitoes – in one of which I crashed – I found myself in love with

T h e M a g i c o f L i f e

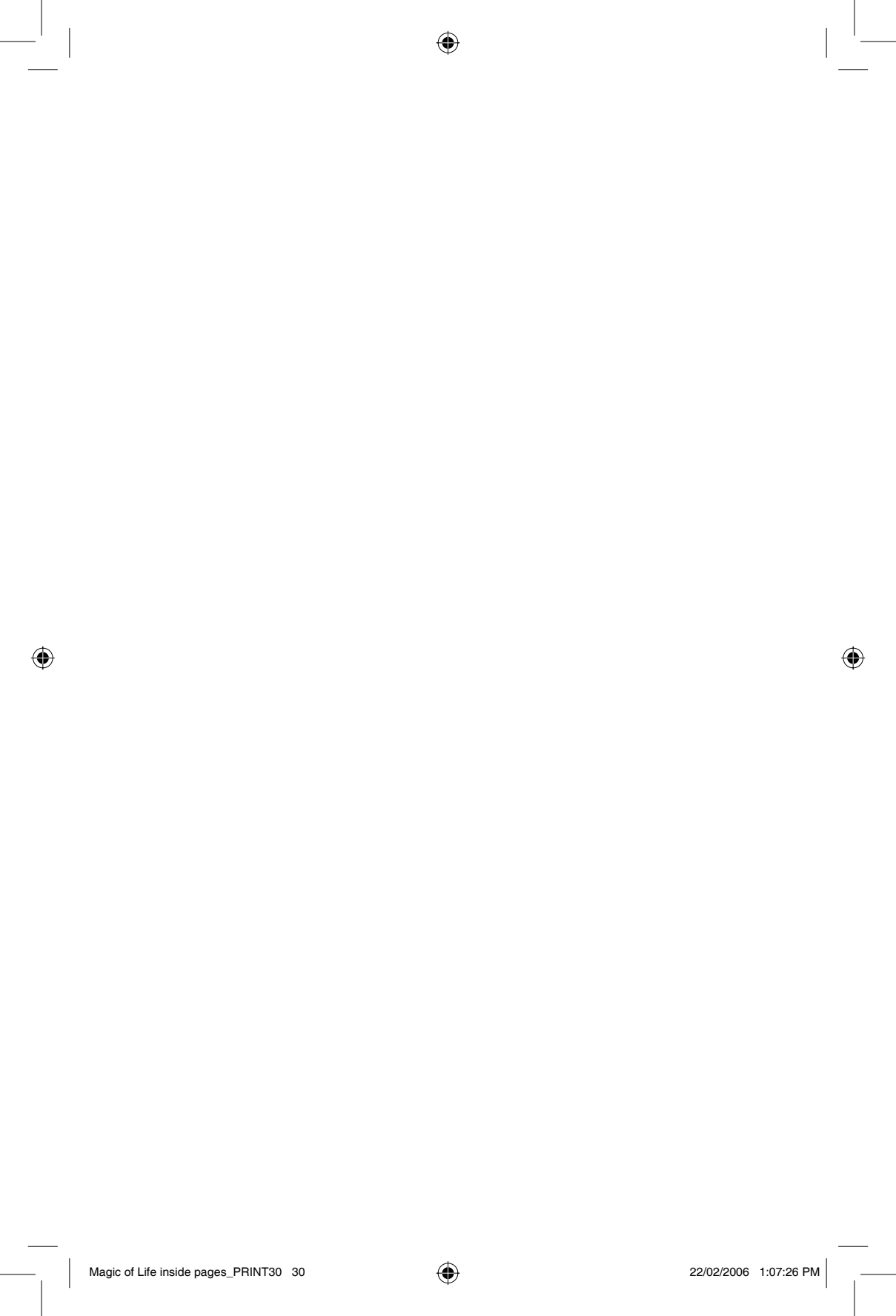
another girl. She subsequently married a fighter pilot who was shot down, became a prisoner of war and survived.

Our lack of sexual education, and the so-called 'morality' of those times, could have forced us into a union which would have been handicapped right from the start, as happened to many, many other young couples in those times.

But we were lucky: We had no idea about contraception, and even less about the fact that just one drop of semen in the vagina could cause pregnancy. We must have been saved by our upright position and pure luck!

Just about the only sexual information we received at the time was the outrageous incorrect rumour going around that some young couple in the district had become stuck together while having intercourse. The story was that the couple had been surprised in the act and the girl had got such a shock that her vagina had gripped the man's penis in a muscular seizure, so that they were stuck together like a couple of dogs!

This really scared us because our activities were so guilty that we could imagine a similar shock if we were interrupted.



CHAPTER 3:

B B E E

At the end of the War, after flying home 4000 miles all the way from Borneo in a Spitfire (some of the Spits were getting a bit unserviceable), I had some tooth trouble and I met Beth: My family were all patients of Dr. Cecil Hearman, a leading Collins St (Melbourne) dental surgeon. I was a young Air Force pilot and Dr. Hearman had a romantic streak: he insisted that his nurse Beth held my hand as he did the painful bits.

I looked up into the most beautiful big brown eyes I had ever seen... Viva-cious, gorgeous, petite 18-year-old Beth



*Jim's mother
welcomes him home.*

SPITFIRE PILOTS HEAD FOR HOME



FLIGHT-LIEUT JIM VICKERS-WILLIS, of Brighton (right) helps Flight-Lieut. Bruce Little, of Manly, N.S.W., to stow clothes and personal gear in the ammunition bin of his Spitfire before taking off from Labuan airstrip on the first stage of the long flight back to Queensland. The two pilots were among the first from the Bomber "Grey Nurse" (457) Squadron to return to Australia when the mass exodus of R.A.A.F. aircraft began in Borneo last week. Only nine of 15 "Spits" finished the air trek without mishap. —Australian Official.

– in my eyes she was like a film star. She had many admirers, especially from Scotch College. Beth lived with her Mother – Mrs Lillian Parkinson, 59 Toorak Road. Within a week of going out together, we decided we wanted to get married.

On the day we became engaged, which was Christmas 1946, I developed a pain: I was writing the 3DB radio news and getting up each day at 5 a.m. to produce the early morning bulletin. I drove into the city in great discomfort to produce the news service and hand it over to the radio station.

Then I got back in my car and drove along St. Kilda Road. I saw Prince Henry's Hospital and the pain was getting pretty bad so I drove straight up to Casualty Section and said: 'I am sick'. They took me in, examined me and sent me straight upstairs to prepare for an appendix operation. That day my hero, the great Australian tennis player John Bromwich, was playing a big Davis Cup match and I had tickets I had been treasuring for weeks. I gave them away to the nursing staff. It was just as well because John Bromwich was beaten in straight sets, 6/4, 6/4, 6/4. I learned this when I came out of the anaesthetic.

I had been brought up with the idea that marriage was a HUGE responsibility and consequently was a 'frightened bachelor' type. I wonder now whether my sudden appendix attack was psychosomatic?

In May that year, while we were engaged, it was Mother's Day and my sister Joan had a beautiful cot for sale, cheap. I bought it and gave it to Beth for a 'Mother's Day present', with a note on it saying, 'Hope we will fill it soon'.

After eighteen months we were married and, although I always enjoyed sexual expression with Beth, I look back now and feel that our physical relationship in early married life was meaningless; we were so ignorant. Our attitudes and ignorance blocked the magic which was there for the taking.

Like so many young men of my day, I, of course, suffered from premature ejaculation – which gave my wife less chance to develop her enjoyment of sex and, in fact, added to our negative experiences at a time when enjoyable and positive ones would have been of great help to our long term relationship.

Our ideas about contraception were formed by one of my relatives who told us: 'To avoid having children you must not

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have intercourse for the first eleven days after your period.' That was the only information we received. We used no other contraception. Needless to say, we had our first baby within a year of our marriage!

I had no idea of how to turn a woman on sexually – or even that it was necessary to turn her on – and neither of us even knew that Beth had a clitoris. When we found out, many, many years later, we went searching for it with a torch, and couldn't find it! For a brief period then we actually believed that maybe she didn't have one, and that this was the explanation of our lack of success in sex.

Beth had some married giri612(8,-0.0005 Tc0.10002 Tc0.(r)-5e exp9(m(ex

prescription, or tablets prescribed when she had a partial miscarriage.. The answer from the doctors was 'no'.

The suggestion was that it had been caused by our genes – if Beth had married someone else or I had married someone else it would very likely not have happened. There was no family history. Now, more than fifty years later, we still haven't any more of a clue, although we read about many such birth mishaps occurring in areas where there is chemical crop spraying, and we wonder...

We were told it was extremely unlikely to happen again in one family. 'A six million to one chance' one doctor said.

Our baby could not suck and Beth, who turned out to be one of those wonderful mothers, expressed the breast milk with a pump and fed her with a spoon, the feeding alone taking many hours each day. The first operation fixed one side of her double harelip. The second operation, which was about three months later, was to close the other side.

When our baby came back from the second operation, neither of us said anything much: She looked terrible – her face was swollen and although we had one of the best surgeons in the world, Dr. Benny Rank (later Sir Benjamin Rank), we had not really hoped that much could be done.

About three days after the operation came a miracle:

The swelling went down; the bruising disappeared – and there was our baby starting to look beautiful. The amazing work of the delicate plastic surgery suddenly became apparent; we both realised that she could have a life after all, and we hugged each other with joy.

Then our little baby boy arrived – also with a double hare lip and cleft palate.

The shock was almost worse than the first time: our son's

hare lip, fortunately, was much less of a problem. Our little girl, who subsequently turned out to be an attractive, strong and capable young woman, had to have fourteen operations, whereas he only had to have two. Our baby boy turned out to be a lovable little boy with a sunny disposition, which he has maintained in adult life. We did not know that our third little baby, who was yet to be born, would arrive with a mark on his lip, but no other face problem – this being dealt with by one small operation – and at age 4 would be locked up in splints for two years with Perthes Disease. In all other respects they were very healthy children and have grown into great people who love their families and hate drugs, etc..

At fifty guineas (\$105) an operation and thirty-four pounds ten (\$70) each time for the hospital – some of which was paid by our small hospital benefits book – our financial life was in total chaos. As a young journalist I was earning 27 pounds (\$54) per week. However, help was to come later through the generosity of our two wonderful plastic surgeons – Mr. Bennie Rank and Mr. Alan Wakefield.

We were experiencing the same sexual problems, but Beth was just being an incredible mother and we were both too busy to give the problems much thought!

I was working as a journalist. I loved writing but did not like the way political news was handled. I had my first glimpse into the effects on the media and politicians of powerful, wealthy political lobbies – like the armaments lobby bankrolling politicians who favoured wars and big defence spending, the road transport lobby supporting politicians who did not favour developing adequate trains, public transport, but wanted more roads and road transport, etc. I was also studying at Melbourne

University part-time and running my own mobile catering business on the side in an effort to make some extra money.

We were rank amateurs in catering and we had some extraordinary adventures, including –

One day, a ship was due to sail from Port Melbourne at 12 noon and a couple of thousand people went down to see it off. We had our kiosk and cafe on Station Pier, the main Melbourne ship pier, with a few customers, minimum staff, and very little food.

The sailing time was changed from noon to 2.30 pm. All of a sudden, about 250 people appeared in the cafe demanding lunch. I raced up to the pie manufacturers' premises and he sent down the first trays of six-dozen pies. A little later the manufacturer came tearing down to our cafe and said: 'I am terribly sorry but in my hurry, by mistake, we sent you down six dozen apple pies – instead of meat pies'. By this time we had sold them all – with tomato sauce on them!

A working partner Les Lepine came into our business. He was going to pay us £900 (\$1,800) to purchase part of his share of the catering firm. Some of this money had to go back into the business anyway – but on a Saturday morning we received the first £17 (\$34) deposit!

This was one of the greatest occasions in our life to date. For two years we had not had a penny to bless ourselves with. There had not even been enough money around our house to buy a pair of socks. What with the mortgage, and the usual bills and the medical and hospital accounts which kept piling up, we had just become accustomed to never being able to buy anything except the barest essentials. Then on this Saturday morning into our hands lobbed this great sum of £17. I said to Beth, "We are going to spend the whole lot, darl".

Beth looked at me with disbelief, and started to tremble. Then

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we both got very excited, put our little daughter in her wheeler, and off we went down to the shops in Church Street, Middle Brighton, on the most exciting spending spree of our lives.

There had been a coat on the lay-by for our little girl for about six months; it was paid for there and then. We bought all sorts of food and fruit that we had wanted; records, flowers for Beth's mother and for my parents – and we came home loaded so that we could hardly carry the goods, laughing and excited and without a penny left. We will never forget that Saturday morning.

CHAPTER 4:

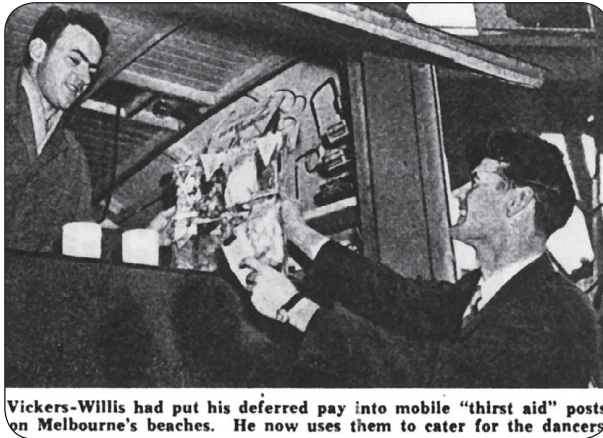
E A E D A C A D

The catering canteens called ‘Thirst Aid Posts’ had now become my full-time job, and I gave up my career in journalism entirely for a few years. The business was our only hope of paying for the operations needed by our baby.



Mobile canteen and kiosk on Station Pier

Mobile canteen 'Thirst Aid Post' in action at Port Melbourne



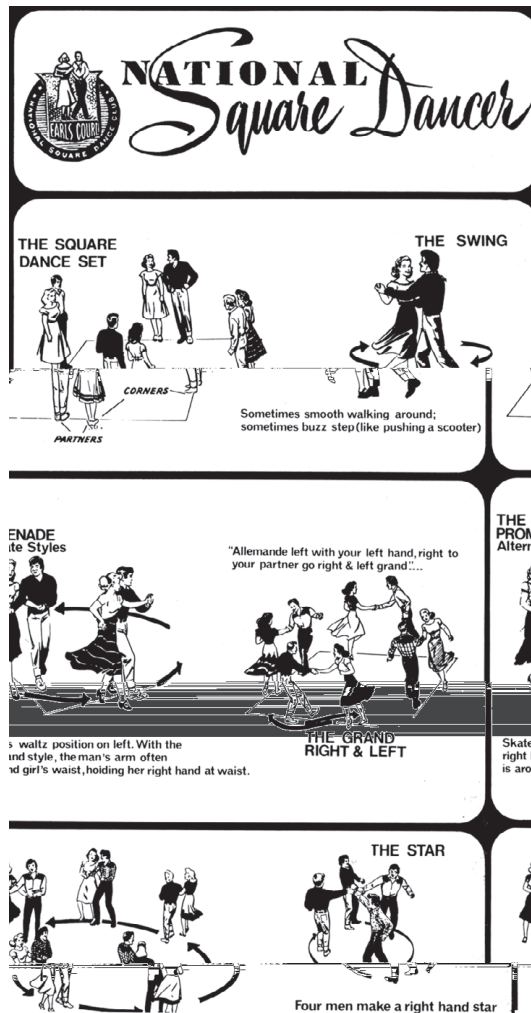
We made money hand over fist, but worked very hard for it. Some days I would go to work at 8am at our Port Melbourne canteen/kiosk and work right through the day, and then right through the night, and I would still be there when the new staff at Port Melbourne came on at 8 o'clock the following morning. Then I would go home to Beth and our baby, with a good growth of whiskers and a biscuit tin full of money. Besides our kiosk/café we had mobile canteens which parked by the big ships and provided pies and coffee quite often day and night

It was all terribly important to us, because we were paying for operations over and above the normal costs of a young couple trying to get established in our new home at 183 Dendy Street, East Brighton – a beautiful little white brick-veneer house, largely designed by Beth. No one has to tell us how important Medicare is. Then there was none.

On the arrival of our second baby, to say we were shocked

when we heard the news would be a great understatement. My car was in for repair, and I ran from the telephone to my parents' home about a mile and a half away. On the way, a neighbour came along and picked me up. My mother and father met me at their gate in tears; they had found out before I got there. However, the plastic surgeons, Mr. Rank and his associate, Mr. Wakefield, gave us much confidence and pointed out that both our children were very healthy in every other respect. It became increasingly urgent to make more money.

A friend, Mrs. Maude Parkes, whose son Phil became our family doctor, owned Russell Collins Cafe – a Melbourne restaurant landmark always filled with flowers. Beth and I used to go there before we were engaged. Mrs. Parkes asked me down there one lunch time and handed me a parcel: 'A little something for your baby'. I thought it was a rattle or some such, and threw the small parcel onto the floor of my open car left parked outside the Herald Office while I was doing my job as a reporter that afternoon. Then I drove into the hospital to see Beth and handed her the parcel. Inside was £100 (\$200) in cash, with a note – 'To help your Peter'. I am quite sure Maude did many other good deeds like this in her life – but none could have possibly been more appreciated than that one at that moment which was just before the Square Dance Boom.



A magical change in our fortunes was about to happen...

We were among young married couples in East Brighton who were trying to get a kindergarten and church hall built. The first job the young fathers took on was digging the drains.

We had working bees each Sunday morning and we organized a Provisional Committee. We ran all sorts of functions – dances, a lawn-growing competition, raffles, and then Christmas Fetes.

I had my first experience in promotion when I organized Father Christmas processions through Middle Brighton, North Brighton and Hampton shopping centres on Saturday mornings to advertise our fetes. These were successful and attracted large crowds and we made plenty of money for the kindergarten.

One night somebody persuaded a square dance caller named Bill McGrath to come down to one of our barn dances and do some calls. We were quite taken with this, and some friends on the provisional committee organized a square dance club in Brighton at which Bill McGrath was the caller. Beth and I were amongst the first dancers – and we quickly realised it was great fun.

Beth was a very good dancer right from the start and a beautiful little set invited her to join them. They told her they had been a bit cautious about asking her because they thought they might have to have her husband as well; they thought I was a terrible square dancer. Beth assured them I would not mind, so she became the number one lady in this set – which later on became my square dance exhibition set.

Some might say I became a caller because I was such a rotten dancer!

A few weeks later we held another kindergarten charity barn dance and, of course, we could not get Bill McGrath along again so I dressed myself up in an old slouch hat, had myself announced as Bill McGraw, learnt the words of one simple

square dance – and went over and called this very briefly. It was really quite a success.

Because I was always looking for means of making money due to our circumstances, I thought about this square dancing: I decided that it was really a beautiful type of entertainment and maybe it could be made popular; perhaps I ought to learn something about it and see if I could help it to develop; we might even make some money out of it.

I started to learn calling square dancing. The trouble was I felt so terribly embarrassed. To get up at the microphone, and actually call a dance to a group of my friends, was very difficult. It was also hard to get anybody to agree to dance to my calling! When I did manage to get them, to reduce my embarrassment I used to take the microphone out onto the terrace where the dancers could not see me and I would call the dance from there, while they would dance inside.

Around this time we decided to hold a square dance party at our house. We had records by the great American square dance caller Joe Lewis. One of our friends – Alf Allen – arrived with his usual half dozen bottles of beer, but became so interested in the square dancing that by the end of the night he said in surprise. ‘Oh, I forgot to unpack them from the boot’.

When the entertainment was so absorbing that Alf Allen forgot to get his beers we felt there must be something in this square dancing! The next time he came to one of our square dance parties, he didn’t even bring the beer with him.

Then our church Provisional Committee decided to run a square dance to make money – and I was to be the caller. We printed tickets that looked very impressive. I had by this time done one or two ‘guest calls’ at various dances and had met a

band of musicians (led by a very original and creative musician Mrs. Frankie Rintel), who were playing for nothing at a charity dance. They agreed to play for us for nothing and I was calling for nothing, so we only had to pay for the cost of the hall. I managed to hire a big Army Hall in Chapel Street, Windsor, for only 10 shillings (\$1) a night.

We built a platform of planks laid over barrels and I remember that every time my foot tapped on the stage the microphone would bob up and down. Our committee went to work around the neighbourhood, and, although practically nobody was interested in square dancing at that time, sold nearly 500 tickets at 5/- each. Most of the buyers came to the dance.

It was a terrific night, with a very big crowd in that Army Hall; the press turned up and someone brought along a searchlight which was used as a spotlight. Square dance caller Bill McGrath arrived and did not call, but just joined in with the dancers like the real good sport he was.

I called the few square dances I knew and, when I ran out of material, I called them over again! It was a remarkably successful night, considering we were all such out-and-out amateurs – and the Melbourne newspaper I worked for, The Sun News Pictorial, produced a large middle-page picture which attracted a lot of interest on the following Monday morning.

I set about using my journalistic ability to write articles about square dancing, and some of these were published. From the people who had attended our dance, we formed the Melbourne Square Dance Club and organized another function immediately. Melbourne Radio Station 3DB, ever on the

alert for something new, engaged an American square dance caller and started a Saturday night square dance program.

Then the management of Earl's Court Ballroom in St. Kilda – with promoter John Brennan at the helm – entered the picture and suggested opening a radio square dance program originating from the ballroom. There was some doubt about the American caller – some square dance sets had walked off the floor one Saturday night and said they could not understand him – and one of John Brennan's sons had been at a charity square dance which I 'called' in Toorak and had enjoyed it.

So I was invited to go down to Earl's Court for an audition. The American square dance caller was invited to attend on the same afternoon.

He duly went down to Earl's Court and did his audition call in front of the 3DB and Earl's Court executives – and an empty hall. My wife and I had 'leaked' the news around, via Beth's sister Joan Tainsh (later a good square dance caller) and some of our square dancers, that we had been invited to Earl's Court for an audition – and we suggested they might like to come and back us up.

So, after the American caller had auditioned, I was invited up on to the stage. Then, out of the shadows and through the archways of Earl's Court came scores of beautifully dressed dancers in their colourful outfits and formed up sets on the floor in front of me.

I called a demonstration dance briefly, then seized my opportunity and invited the square dancers to go out and invite in all the radio and ballroom executives so that I could teach them square dancing. The surprised executives were dragged into the sets and, there and then, we taught them to square dance and had them clapping and stamping their feet, and thoroughly enjoying themselves. So we got the job!

CALLER SIGNS WITH 3DB, EARL'S COURT



Earl's Court, St. Kilda, 3DB and well-known square dance caller Jim Vickers-Willis have signed a three-way agreement on square dancing.

● Picture above shows Mr J. Brennan, proprietor of Earl's Court, shaking hands with Jim Vickers - Willis after signing the agreement. Norman Spencer, 3DB's programme manager (left) looks on. Behind are three of Mr Brennan's sons, Rex, Barry and Ian.

Jim's signature means he will be virtually employed by 3DB and Earl's Court.

In turn 3DB will have rights to broadcast shows from Earl's Court.

This move, finalised last week-end, tightens up the commercial control of square dancing.

Earl's Court and 3DB were the first in their own fields to take a big interest in square dancing.

It involved, first of all, a one-hour program on radio 3DB each Saturday night, broadcast from an Earl's Court public

Jim Vickers - Willis

square dance. I was the caller. At this stage I knew only about six dances. However, practically no one else knew any more, other than Bill McGrath, and so I just called the same dances over and over again, and set about learning some more.



Ted Gray, the Engineer from radio station 3DB, took a tape-recording that first broadcast night and I was able to listen to it during the following week. When I heard my performance, I was shocked by how bad it was: my speech was not clear enough, and I was singing flat in various places. I listened to it over and over, and corrected myself. By the time this had happened over several weeks, I had improved my calling immensely.

When the big square dance boom really got going – which eventually turned into what was probably the biggest boom anywhere in the world – and other competing callers entered into the field, I had improved so much that I was way out in front and hard to catch.

The Earl's Court proprietor, John Brennan, taught me a great deal about promotion. He was one of the old-time boxing promoters, and back in the John Wren days an opposition promoter tried to turn his car over and kill him. He had four of his sons Barry, Rex, Ian and Kevin working at Earl's Court, and they all set about the promotion of square dancing.

Apart from the money, I think that John Brennan really was delighted to have such a happy and, what he considered, suitable entertainment in his beautiful ballroom.

We worked hard for about six weeks, and then one night people started to come from everywhere. Trams were pulling up and unloading. The numbers went up that night from 300 to about 800 dancers. John Brennan said: 'It's started – now you watch what happens.' Sure enough, the numbers went up over 1,000. Then we had to open another night and then another, and then the numbers went up to 2,000 a night.

I had also opened up a square dance at the big Leggett's ballroom, in Prahran, on Friday nights.

Before the boom started, I called in one afternoon to see the Proprietor Phil Leggett and asked if he had any nights available for square dancing.

He said he was free on Friday nights, but wanted to know how much I wanted as a fee. 'Nothing', I replied. 'Nothing?' echoed Phil. 'That's right', I said: 'I want half the profits'.

I saw a slight smile come over Phil Leggett's face, and knew he was thinking – 'Oh well, there probably won't be any profits, anyway', and so we shook hands on the deal. Nonetheless, in typical Phil Leggett style, he and his partner Bruce Holdsworth set to work to organise our square dance night efficiently.

Well, the first night we broke even. However, it was quite

a success, and Phil and Bruce said they thought it was a very pleasant type of entertainment, and a very nice type of people who attended. On the second night we made £10 (\$20), and Phil solemnly counted off £5 for me and £5 for them. The third night we made £20 – and we shared it equally again. By the fourth night the crowd had swelled and I got £30 for my share. I went home to Beth absolutely delighted. My salary as a journalist was only £27 per week and here I was, with 3 1/2 hours square dance calling, earning more than that.

Th

THE 'IRON LUNG' OF DANCE FEARS

Psychologists call them 'inhibitions', but, while teaching square dancing to thousands of men and women, I started to realise that it was such things as fear and doubt and guilt and misinformation which 'kept people in their iron lung' and held them back from enjoying life, including enjoying their relationships, the way nature intended.

I saw it night-after-night when I would be teaching about 1000 men and women to square dance on our Tuesday beginners night at Earl's Court, the big St Kilda (Melbourne) ballroom which was National Square Dance Club headquarters.

We would have a big circle in the middle of the main hall, teaching the beginners the basic steps. Under the eaves at the side of the hall there would be many men sitting out the dance – their aim 'to watch for a while'.

The fact was they were scared of making fools of themselves and had we not done something to trick them into getting going, very likely they would have gone home after the first couple of dances and we would never have seen them again.

We had pretty girls in our exhibition sets going out under the eaves and asking the men would they like to dance. Our girl would then take a man by the hand, lead him into the big circle, plonk him by some unaccompanied lady in the circle, and go out and get another one. In this way the girls 'saved' hundreds of inhibited men and turned them into happy square dancers.

Once they had survived the first dance, and found that they could do it quite easily, their fears were allayed and you couldn't keep them off the floor!

I found that that was the same sort of fear element so often handicapping sexual relationships.

Then there was the guilt and doubt created by some parents or teachers or the local priest or other dominant adults – making young ones feel guilty about sexual enjoyment, starting from masturbation and continuing through the puberty years and on through life.

I felt that some adults – to cover up their own disappointing failure in their adult sexual life – labelled sex as “boring” or “over-rated” or some such. This made them feel better; it meant they were a failure at something that was not worthwhile – so, in fact, they made out that their failure was really a ‘success’.

The trouble was the young ones so often picked it up as *a fact of life* – and in living by this negative attitude detracted from their own chances of happiness in life. Particularly when parents passed on the idea *that long term sexual enjoyment with a partner was not a normal part of marriage*, this parental excuse for their own

Square Dancing Boom Bigger, Better and Boomier

SIXTY thousand carefree Victorians will have "climbed the golden stairs" before this week ends.

Callers have sung themselves hoarse —

and sales of records and apparel soar.

Can square dancing keep up this dizzy tempo? Ten months ago the

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FEATURES**

THE SUN
Wed., July 1, 1953



*Proof is provided
by this happy pic-
ture of caller Jim
Vickers - Willis's
wife, Beth.*

We heard the background story that square dancing originated when the Americans took European traditional dances

and set them in a square of eight dancers, using a 'prompter' who called the dance for a couple of sets at a time; in the 1930s when the introduction of amplifying allowed many more sets to be 'prompted', Henry Ford – considering square dancing a valuable social asset – had donated \$50,000 which helped greatly in promoting it.

When we went across to open square dancing in Adelaide, promoter John Brennan did a magnificent job.

By this time, the only night I could possibly spare away from Melbourne was Monday night. The people in Adelaide said, 'There has never been anything successful on a Monday night in Adelaide.' Nevertheless, I said it could not be any other night.

Well, John Brennan got his promotion going so well in Adelaide that he had the press and the managements of the main ballroom and one of the main stores all co-operating. Full-page pictures of me were published in the daily papers without any cost to us. On the opening night we all set out – including our musicians from Earl's Court, and our exhibition set, and we square danced on the tarmac at Essendon aerodrome (where in wartime I had learned to fly) before we left Melbourne.

In Adelaide it was pelting with rain. When we arrived at the Palais Royale Ballroom we found we could not get in. There was such a huge crowd that it was jammed all round the entrance. Eventually more than a thousand people overflowed the hall that night and they overloaded the trams on North Terrace.

At one stage Beth and the exhibition set girls were trying to force their way through the crowd at the front door and Beth had the trousers (which had just been ironed) of the male

partners on her arm. With the crowd pushing around her, she found the trousers being torn off her arm. Beth called out: 'Help – I'm losing my pants!' The crowd opened up magically and let her through.

After two weeks in Adelaide the dance had to be transferred to the huge Centennial Hall at Wayville. In this great barn – plus the two connecting annexes that were opened up on each side – I taught 4,000 beginners to square dance each night.

We had many nights like that and I used to look out from the stage in wonder. There were more than 50 amplifier speakers in the main hall alone, and the dancers farthest from me were so distant that they seemed only about two inches high. It was a beautiful sight from the stage with all the colourful frocks and happy faces and a really throbbing air of excitement and happiness.

Beth in her pretty square dance outfit (often an off the shoulder frock) would always be down there on the floor working hard to organise the sets and help people to join in.

Coca Cola trucks would drive right into the four corners of the hall and unload their drinks. At the end of a lively dance, when everybody was hot, I would say something like, 'Promenade off the floor, have a Coke there's lots more', and those thousands of people would descend on the Coca Cola. Within a few minutes all the stocks would vanish.

Week after week we flew over to Adelaide, and we stayed in the Honeymoon Suite at the old South Australian Hotel, where their famous doorkeeper would not allow our square dance party to wear polo necks in the lunchroom.

Jim Vickers - Wills



*Calling for the square dancing at Earl's Court and for the Exhibition
Set en route to open the square dancing in Adelaide.*

Air, Road Traffic Halted for Square Dancing 'King'



About 2000 people welcomed American square dance "king," Joe Lewis, at T.A.A.'s Essendon terminal yesterday. They caused traffic jams on the airport road, blocked passenger exits on the tarmac and held up departure of two aircraft.

Lewis left the plane through a "guard of honor," and was besieged by autograph hunters.

A mobile public address system was erected and he called dances on the tarmac.

An hour before Lewis arrived all car parks in the T.A.A. area of the airport were full, and cars had to be diverted elsewhere.

A stream of vehicles banked up on the road leading to the tarmac and many minor collisions occurred.

Heavy Cup week traffic aggravated the crush in the terminal lounge. Hundreds were packed into the limited building and an overflow climbed the barrier fence on to the tarmac.

When the aircraft arrived, square dancers surged toward the gate to the tarmac, and other passengers were unable to reach the lounge. T.A.A. officials had to make repeated appeals

over a loud-speaker system to clear the gates.

Airport business was disrupted for over half an hour as a throng of people gathered directly in the path of loading aircraft.

T.A.A. officials estimated the crowd was the largest ever to gather at

the terminal. They said it was twice as great as the gathering to welcome prisoners of war returning from Korea earlier this year.

As the crowd dispersed, traffic jams occurred on the airport road and at Moonee Ponds junction. At one stage on the road 13 cars locked bumpers. Six suffered minor damage.

Lewis, who introduced square dancing to Australia in 1951, has returned for a season at Earl's Court. St. Kilda, headquarters of the National Square Dance Club.

A square dance ball will be held to welcome him.

Joe Lewis, whom we knew as the world's top caller, was next on our promotion schedule. He was flown in from USA. . .

He was one of my heroes and I had the extraordinary experience, at his welcome ball, of hearing quite a lot of hisses and boos directed at him from some in the huge crowd – turning into cheers and clapping when I took the microphone.

Square dancers are very loyal to the caller who taught them and obviously some thought this might be a Management move to replace me. The truth was I had helped to finance his visit which taught us all a lot, especially me. The square dancers' loyalty, misplaced at the time, later became very important for us.

Joe Lewis played the squeeze box and sang pop songs as well as calling square dances. Soon he was being cheered to the echo at every performance.

He was amazed at the size of our crowds and intrigued about our Aussie adaptation of square dancing.

Prior to square dancing, Australian men danced on Saturday night in collar, tie, jacket, leather shoes.

Suddenly came the square dance freedom of open neck shirts, slacks, golf shoes – heaven. This revolution was followed immediately by rock and roll casual dressing.



The square dance Exhibition Set with Beth VW and Peter Tidex ducking under the arch, plus caller Bill McGrath who taught us all in the first place.

After my last 30 years research, looking back on those tumultuous square dance boom days of the 1950's and 60's (some people today denigrate those times but they were days of much fun and badly needed social change), it was the standard accepted attitudes towards such things as illegitimate births, condoms, etc. which now seem incredible.

Little children born out of wedlock were 'bastards' and carried a black mark for life even though they had had nothing to do with it. And condoms?

1953 – My wife and I decided to use condoms (in those days they were known as 'French letters').

I was in the thick of it – 'calling' the dancing for crowds of from 1,000 to 4,000 nightly as well as doing five local radio

programs a week. About a fifth of the adult population of Melbourne appeared to go square dancing – some dancing four and five nights a week. Some picture theatres closed for lack of patronage.

That's why today we rarely see any nostalgia pictures of the great square dance boom on t/v: the movie photographers (who provided most of the nostalgia pictures now shown on television) were forbidden to film square dancing. One movie photographer was a good friend of mine and even he had to say 'no' because the theatres were their livelihood.

It seems laughable today, but to buy condoms in those days required courage. I felt I was not so well-known in Adelaide – so I would buy them when I was over there on my weekly visit to 'call' the big square dance at the Centennial Hall.

Adelaide – leafy streets, beautiful gardens beside the Torrens River which from time to time was completely emptied of water and the bottom cleaned out! Clean streets, well behaved, well dressed people; known around Australia as 'the city of churches'; in the fifties it was said that if you fired a cannon down the main street at 11-30 pm you would not hit anyone...

Down Rundle Street I went and, at the first chemist shop, a woman assistant came out to serve me – so I bought some toothpaste! At the next shop a man served me but said he was a Catholic and did not handle such goods on moral grounds. This further upset me!

I went into five chemist shops and at each one it was either a lady shop assistant or a religious gentleman. At the sixth, to my great relief, the man behind the counter took my order and disappeared

behind the scenes. There was a shop full of people, and, as I waited uneasily, he called over the partition: 'What size Sir?'

That flattened me: I did not know that they came in sizes! I looked around embarrassed and called back: 'Oh, about average I think'. (Like most men, I really thought I was a bit on the small size if anything!).

The chemist came around the partition and said: 'No Sir, I mean do you want three or six?'

No, you don't have to go far back to see how ridiculously guilty some ignorant oldies in our society were made to feel in the past – oldies who themselves then passed on their traditions (useful or stupid) and attitudes (healthy and positive or negative and guilty) now influencing the relationships of the young couples who are marrying and divorcing.

Incidentally, no one had explained how to use a condom. It fell off and Beth became pregnant. Of course. I had just had my first book published – and it was not about sex education!

Reception To Square Dance Author



Messrs. V. M. Branson (left), managing director, and R. M. Steele (right) chairman of directors of Rigby Ltd., looking through a new book on square dancing by Mr. Jim Vickers-Willis and his wife at a reception in their honor at the South Australian Hotel yesterday.

Later, as I interviewed many couples in my book research, I started to feel that some young ones were thoroughly confused by the example and information they had received about the place and the value of sex in their life and marriage relationships.

I began to ask were we failing to understand how things had changed; that some of our old rules, values and expectations were now inappropriate?

For instance, in my young days one of the biggest motivations for marriage was that that was often the only way you could get a girl into bed. Not so today. For women, one of the greatest motivations was that marriage was seen as the only way they could gain family security. Today many young women can earn more than their man and are not willing to settle for second best any more. Also where marriage for most women was once a solitary confinement sentence, with 50% of women working outside the home, the chances of meeting someone of whom there is a special connection have soared.

Recent interviews revealed many young women not wanting marriage: typical comment 'I'm not interested in going to work and coming home to do all the chores and look after the kids'.

In Kenya, now that there is a law forbidding female circumcision, some young ones have actually taken their parents to court. This requires great bravery and sacrifice, but it is interesting to note that *it is the young ones who are taking the lead in moving away from the accepted custom.*

Does our natural horror of this destructive physical treatment of young people in Kenya need to be equated with the facts about what has been happening psychologically in our own society? Long standing traditions – no matter how stupid or destructive – seem to die hard, especially with older people.

In early interviews, I started to ask *'have we been mutilating our growing up children's minds similarly to the old women of Kenya mutilating the bodies of their daughters?'* Have we been engaging in psychological circumcision? If so, when are we going to snap out of it?

Jim Vickers - Wills

THE SPOTLIGHTS TURNED BLUE





Hall's Soft Drinks sponsored the first Outside Broadcast for an Adelaide t/v station — our square dance at the Palais.

Although I loved square dancing, I found, after two years of 'calling' dances for thousands of square dancers five nights a week in Melbourne and one night a week in Adelaide, in the big public ballrooms, that I was under great pressure to keep going night after night and always put on a good show.

Our marriage relationship also left much to be desired – although most people were unaware of it at the time. To the world we were an ideal young couple, but our ignorance about sex in particular – and consequent lack of a meaningful sex relationship – caused great unnecessary stress.

Looking back, I now believe that this was an underlying cause of what happened...

Another was cigarette smoke which I believe damaged my immune system. Although I did not smoke, several in the family smoked. Also, on my job I was breathing deeply all night. Every night as I called the dances from the stage, the spotlights on me were blue with smoke. I wonder how many other entertainers have suffered ill health for similar reasons?

I started to develop fibrositis in my back, and sometimes while I was up there on the stage smiling and laughing, I was in a lot of pain.

Then, suddenly, polio hit!

After flying back from Adelaide following the Monday night square dance at Centennial Hall, a lumbar puncture confirmed that I had polio. A few days later my arms stopped working. Then I became almost completely paralysed, including my breathing, and was put in an iron lung.

The first iron lung I saw, built to keep alive the son of an American millionaire, was made of iron and steel. It was huge and the young man's head protruded from the end. He lived in the iron lung until he died – for 18 years. I remember seeing the pictures and thinking ‘poor fellow; how terrible’. I never imagined I would be in the same predicament.

My iron lung was made of timber – like a huge coffin. It was built in South Australia in a factory set up by Lord Nuffield, the head of Morris Cars, on one of his many charitable visits to Australia. But for him, many people like me would not be alive.

When I first was admitted to the great Fairfield Infectious Diseases Hospital (Melbourne), I lay on a hard hospital bed and did not sleep. It was like a very bad flu and I saw “hobgoblins” walking across the ceiling

T h e M a g i c o f L i f e

A few days later, my arms stopped working: I was feeling pretty sick, but I can remember thinking how interesting it was to find that my arms would not work; this was what “paralysis” was like; one day I would write about this. I was a little worried that it might upset my wife when she came to see me at visiting hours. I remember sitting up with my arms folded in front and I could not move either of them – quite an extraordinary discovery.

My body juddered violently as I tried to draw in breaths. As the polio paralysis spread to my lungs, I found I could not breathe. That dramatic moment in my life was captured in this article published at the time in The Sun newspaper:

"IRON LUNG WAS LIFE TO ME"

re-dance caller, who is says JIM VICKERS-WILLIS, the well-known squa
fighting polio.

ESCAPING THE IRON LUNG NO PUSHOVER

Then came the battle to get out of the iron lung: Unless you win this battle, you stay in the lung for life. Some people just haven't got the muscles or muscle recovery to allow them to get out, but I was one who probably had.

However, whether it is the 'psychological iron lung' I sometimes speak of, or the real thing, getting out of the iron lung is no pushover.

The idea I found was to get out bit by bit and stay out as long as possible, so that muscles could recover and gain strength gradually.

At first, my mother and my wife would sit by the iron lung and read to me while the lid was open. Their faces were a study in concern and I'm sure it was nerve wracking for them, too.

The reading was to keep my mind off the fact that I was choking. After about three minutes, I would signal them to close the lid quickly.

Bit by bit I managed to stay out a little longer, but it was a terrible struggle. There was nothing to do – except just lie there and keep every breath going. One day I managed to stay out for an hour – and this was announced at my old square dance club. It was reported back to me that all the dancers had cheered. This really encouraged me.

There was a little girl named Vicki in the hospital in another ward and every time I managed to stay out for an hour, the staff would report to me that Vicki had stayed out for an hour and a half. Next day I would do my best to beat her and then would find that Vicki had stayed out for 2 hours. Every time I got a little bit better – they would report to me Vicki had done even better. I am a very competitive fellow and this really spurred me on.

Subsequently, I wondered if they had invented Vicki; however, as I am writing this book someone has just come to

my house and told me there is a girl named Vicki living in the next suburb who is crippled by polio and she was a little child in Fairfield Hospital at the time I was there. I believe it may be the same Vicki, and I am going to try to see her.

A male orderly named Ted, whom I was told was homosexual, was very kind to me. He would come along from time to time with a wet flannel and put it on my forehead. He would say: 'Keep going Jim'. I will never forget his kindness and the devoted care of the sisters at Fairfield Hospital.

While in the iron lung, I recall reading in the red ink 'Stop Press' on the front page of the Melbourne Herald 'Jim Vickers-Willis is on the danger list at Fairfield Hospital'. Some time later I read in the news columns of the Sun: 'Jim Vickers-Willis's name has been taken off the danger list at Fairfield Hospital'. I breathed a sigh of relief!

In the iron lung, when I ceased being able to urinate, the medical staff gained a bit of sex education. They put in a catheter which eased the problem. Eventually I had nine catheters put in, one after the other. Each time they took it out, hoping I would start working, but then my stomach would blow up bigger and bigger and they'd have to put in another catheter to empty my bladder.

After a few weeks I had an idea:

When Beth was coming to see me during visiting hours I said to her: 'after I have had sex I usually find I want to urinate, so what about rubbing my penis, get it interested and then maybe it might have the right effect.'

Needless to say, poor Beth was very embarrassed: She looked around at the ward full of people.

'Come on' I said, 'put your hand through the side flap and people will just think you are adjusting the bedclothes.'

Well, being Beth, she had a go and in no time at all I was getting very interested!

Visiting hour finished and Beth went off. All of a sudden I started to urinate! I went on and on and flooded the inside of the respirator, and the blankets etc.

It happened that day that my nurse had had to go out and pass her final exams. When she came back successful she was delighted that I had managed to pass water. We both called it 'Our passing out day'.

The medical staff at Fairfield Hospital were very interested. The staff sister who had to clean up was not so impressed..

Beth was pregnant when I contracted polio, and soon after I got into the Recovery Ward, our baby son Tony was born. My old newspaper office took a photo of the baby and sent a print to me at Fairfield Hospital.

Then they took a photograph for the next day's paper of me studying the photo in bed. I was so delighted when our little boy was born without any hare lip or cleft palate – though it turned out that he had a slight mark on his lip, and required one corrective operation. I could not help remembering my astrologer father's prediction – 'This problem will gradually diminish over the next seven years'.

Once more our baby was a sturdy, healthy child.

Dr. McLorinan, the Head of the Hospital who was known to everyone as 'Sandy' McLorinan, came in one day and I told him: 'I want to get out of this iron lung ward and down to the Recovery Ward, Dr. McLorinan; I can't sleep in this ward; all the people clanking buckets and looking after dying patients all night'. Sandy McLorinan said: 'But you can't leave the Respirator Ward until you've managed to stay out of the iron lung for twelve days in succession'. I had stayed out for 24 hours.

Nevertheless, he gave in to me and sent me up to Ward 9, the Recovery Ward. I think he came in for some criticism because he did this – but he was giving me a go, and I appreciated it.

However, away from the iron lung I could not sleep because I was surviving almost entirely on my neck muscles which are voluntary. This meant that whenever I fell asleep my involuntary breathing would stop and I would choke and wake up I again.

So I went on for 21 days and nights practically without sleeping – and then collapsed, and was taken back and put in the iron lung, and kept there for three days. Throughout the 21 days I could hardly eat at all, but once I returned to the lung and got some air into me, I started eating like a wolf.

After three days' rest in the iron lung, they took me back to the Recovery Ward. This time I went on for 34 days and nights virtually without sleep. Then I collapsed and was put back in the iron lung, as before.

When they took me back to Recovery Ward I asked the Head Physiotherapist whether she thought I would ever be able to call a square dance again, and she replied:

'No, Mr. Vickers-Willis, nothing like that, I am afraid.'

Nevertheless, although she turned out to be so wrong, she set about doing everything possible to make my breathing work. One method was to roll me over partly on my stomach with my leg up (in the resting position used by pregnant women) with the idea of making my diaphragm work downwards instead of against gravity.

One day they did this to me and, all of a sudden, I was able to speak with a proper voice – instead of the tiny little whisper which was all I had been able to manage. They realized that my diaphragm was working better, and so there was much concentration on this treatment.

Then I met a physiotherapist named Richard Williams, who

had been in England treating smog victims. He told me: 'Jim, if you go back in that iron lung you will never get out of it; you've got to fight like mad and learn to breathe' He helped me with all sorts of manual pushing and pulling, and encouragement

Then they gave me what I think was called "liquid pheno-barb" to make me sleep, and I slept and slept and slept. I kept on breathing. They would wake me up to try and feed me and, as the spoon approached my mouth, my head would drop and I would fall asleep again! At this stage I was only 6 stone in weight.

Next came a period when I suffered from hallucinations and dreams. I had a friend in the Respirator Ward who had been in a lung for many years. His name was Bill Mushins, a former Navy officer.

I dreamt that I had found a method of curing Bill Mushins by teaching him to breathe with his diaphragm. In my dream I would get him out of the iron lung and everything would be going O.K., and then suddenly he would stop breathing. Of course, I would have to call the Sister to return him to the iron lung before he died. So in the middle of the night I would call out with my weak little voice, and other patients would hear me calling and would shout out to the sister in charge of our Recovery Ward, and she would come running. Then she would assure me that it was all a dream, and I would go back to sleep.

Of course, once asleep, I would start dreaming again that I was helping Mushins to get out of his iron lung, and once more he would stop breathing, and I would start calling out for the Sister. So the poor Ward Sister would once again have to rush down from upstairs to attend to me.

On one occasion Night Nurse Reid of the Recovery Ward wrote in her log, 'Mr. Vickers-Willis is absolutely the worst patient I have ever nursed'.

Years later we met her at a party and she said kindly to Beth: 'But if he hadn't been like that he wouldn't have got better'

I have just been written to by an old square dancer telling me that at the time Fairfield Hospital had a special phone line to handle calls inquiring about me, and sometimes it was staffed by square dance volunteers. I didn't know.

One day I was trying to learn to stand, and I had a physio named Bea Bourke standing next to me. I decided to take a step and walk. But as soon as my foot touched the ground, my leg collapsed and down I went, straight for the hard floor. Bea Bourke reacted like a flash: her arms went around me and stopped me with my head about one inch from the floor. I was never more thankful.

At this stage I used to dream about standing and walking; it seemed such a terribly hard thing to do – and, in fact, since then I have realized what an extraordinary trick it is that we human beings manage to stand up at all!

My mother was a very faithful visitor to the hospital, even though it was a long drive for Mother and Dad from their home in Brighton. Beth used to come in looking beautiful and usually carrying some lovely little posy of flowers she had made for me. I would put the flowers by the bed and study them endlessly all day, thinking about Beth. The square dancers, too, were wonderful, and they formed a roster to make sure that there was someone visiting me almost every visiting hour.

I was now starting to breathe a little more but it was very dicey; the slightest obstruction in my throat could not be coughed away because there was no power at all in my coughing mechanism.

One weekend when they allowed me to come home for a break, I got into difficulty because I had a touch of bronchitis. My throat started to block up and I could not clear it. Beth called one of our neighbours, Ron Webb, and together they

carried me into the car. Beth set off to return me to the iron lung at Fairfield, which was about 10 miles away. On the way, I stopped breathing, and they dragged me out of the car.

Beth laid me on the footpath and pushed up and down really hard on my chest to get me breathing again. Then they put me back in the car, and Beth drove at high speed to St. Kilda Junction where she got into a terrible traffic jam, with hundreds of cars from football matches at Melbourne Cricket Ground and the Richmond Football Ground. She honked her horn, and people laughed at her, not realising that there was someone dying in the back seat.

Eventually a motorcycle policeman found us – his name was Constable Sinclair – and I will never forget him heading off through that crowd, clearing a path for us and eventually leading us down the wrong side of Punt Road, with Beth driving our car at 70 miles an hour. We made it to Fairfield, and as they got me out of the car, with the assistant Matron and all the nursing sisters standing by, I stopped breathing.

70 m.p.h. mercy dash with choking husband

SQUARE dance caller, Jim Vickers-Willis, was rushed to Fairfield Hospital on Saturday afternoon in a car driven at 70 m.p.h. by his wife, escorted by a police motor cyclist.

Vickers-Willis, a polio sufferer, had a choking fit while spending the week-end at his Brighton home.

During the dash to hospital, Mrs. Vickers-Willis had to stop the car and apply artificial respiration to her husband.

"Once I thought the artificial respiration had

failed so I just punched Jim in the chest to make him take a breath," she added.

To make matters worse, Mrs. Vickers-Willis was caught in a traffic jam at St. Kilda Junction.

"The more I shouted and pressed the car horn, the more the people in nearby cars just laughed," Mrs. Vickers-Willis said.

Then Constable Sinclair came to the rescue and escorted the car to Fairfield.

"Const. Sinclair was wonderful," Mrs. Vickers-Willis said. "I'll never forget him for what he did. His action saved Jim's life."

Vickers-Willis was placed in an iron lung and his condition was much improved last night.

In front of all those sisters, Beth leapt on me and started pumping up and down on my chest again to get my breathing working. Then I was put in the iron lung – and was safe. Afterwards the Matron took Beth in for a cup of tea and said: ‘I will give you a job any time you want’.

All sorts of good people came around. One man named Alister Strong, who owned a cleaning business, came into our house regularly and cleaned it for Beth, free of charge. A Middle Brighton Italian fruiterer (and talented singer/magician), Vin Spano, told Beth that, while her husband was in hospital, he would not charge her anything for fruit. Beth refused – but from then on he made everything half price while I was sick. Other people helped with our garden and brought special food into the hospital to help build me up. A young square dancer Dan Bartley (later a skilled puppet maker and puppeteer for our Puppet Pantomime in later chapter) painted our house for nothing.

I have never forgotten this, and that is why I have never charged any social bodies or charities for square dance calling over the past 30 years; they are always offering me money and I say: ‘No thanks – it’s a pleasure’. In fact, I know that the kindness of all those helpers during my long illness, apart from being a vital factor in my recovery, had a profound effect on my whole attitude towards life.

One thing I thought about constantly was how to get back to square dancing and build it up again. After I collapsed, all our programs had been taken off the air. The number of people attending square dances had fallen off tremendously, although there were some benefit dances being held for me and quite a lot of money had been raised by these, and handed over to Beth.

One afternoon, Leggett’s Ballroom proprietor Phil Leggett was visiting me at Fairfield Hospital, and I seized my opportunity: ‘Phil’, I said. ‘When I get out of this place I’m going

to badly need to make some money. Will you hire me your ballroom one night so that I can put on a really big square dance?’

‘Of course,’ said Phil, who probably thought I would never be getting up anyway. ‘But I won’t hire it to you; the day you are fit enough to do it, I will give you our ballroom free for a night.’ ‘Done,’ said I. It was the biggest ballroom in Melbourne.

Well, although he didn’t realize it, from that moment onward I was planning my big comeback night. He kept his promise too.

Some of the money which had been raised at benefit square dance nights was used to buy an iron lung which was placed in my home at Brighton. This enabled me to come home for a weekend.

I was a test case for the ward: the other polio patients in my ward all wanted to know if my penis would work.

It sounds funny but it was a real worry to these partially paralysed men. When Beth brought me back to my bed, after my week-end at home, to her embarrassment they were asking me did it work even before she had left the ward. It did.

When I eventually came home to stay for good – with Beth’s loving care and cooking and all the beautiful broths and soups which her mother and my mother made constantly – I started to gain strength.

I remember saying to Beth: ‘the first thing I have got to do is to be able to breathe’. It’s really basic when you are at that stage, but some months later – with one arm swinging in the breeze, the other arm working partially, one leg partly paralysed and about 50% of breathing – I was getting around leaning on Beth.

So I set to work to promote my big ‘comeback’ square dance.

Everyone volunteered his or her services – and my old rival caller Eddie Carol, who was now calling regularly at Leggett’s Ballroom where I had first opened the square dancing, said he would donate his services for the night. Musicians, door staff,

all worked without charge, and the huge ballroom was given to us free as promised.

About 3,000 attended the Comeback square dance – and I was wheeled onto the stage in a wheelchair. I called briefly – and whenever I ran out of breath my friend, another caller Bill Swan, would pick up the call and carry on until I could get my breath back.

I made one of the worst speeches I have ever made, but everybody stamped and cheered. Behind the scenes was the head physio from Fairfield Hospital and my wife with an oxygen cylinder, also Graham Kennedy, soon to become Australia's top television star.

My own physio had told me that if I ran out of breath she was going to leap up onto the stage, put her hand on my tummy and say: 'Breathe down there, you mutt!' After I called my theme tune, Alabama Jubilee, finishing with the line 'promenade your lady fair, I'm out of breath but I still got there!' the crowd cheered for minutes.

So I said: 'Would you like to see the ghost walk?' I got up out of my wheelchair and, helped by Beth, walked a few paces. Then – almost for the first time – I waved Beth away and walked the last few paces off the stage and through the curtains on my own. The cheering was deafening, and I still have a recording which is included in our audio cassette 'Square Dance at Home'. Once through the curtains, I was grabbed by the physios before I collapsed!

A Brighton lady, Bobbie Hanson, widow of Hanson the Builder who has a Brighton street named after him, told me recently that she was there and, at the finish, just about everyone in that crowd of 3000 dancers was in tears. I didn't know.

The money we made that night was used to pay our fares on the liner Stratheden to holiday in sunny Queensland. This was vital because the early improvement is the most important in polio recovery.

My wife and her girlfriend – Moya Holden, who was a member of our exhibition set – used to take me into the sea at beautiful Queensland coastal holiday resort Caloundra. It was ocean and fairly rough, and I could not stand up properly. Sometimes I would be pulled out of their hands by waves, and they would have to chase me and pull me half-drowning out of the surf.

It was all pretty hair-raising, but gradually, bit-by-bit, I gained strength by going into the sea every day and being pushed around by the waves. The girls would hang on to me, one on each side – but after about three months, amazingly, I could go into the sea on my own.

I used to lie on the sand in the sun, and, when I had to get up, they would lift me. After about three months, one day I got up off the sand unaided. It was like a miracle!

On my 37th birthday, I called a square dance at Caloundra and six busloads of dancers came 70 miles from Brisbane.

Hundreds danced 'Mr. Sandman' on the sand

Last night 300 people motored from Brisbane to Caloundra to learn to do the "Mr. Sandman" square dance.

The "teacher" was Mr. Jim Vickers-Willis, Australia's best-known square dance caller. and had to be placed in an iron lung.

Proceeds of the night went to open a £30,000 fund which Mr. Vickers-Willis wants to raise for polio sufferers.

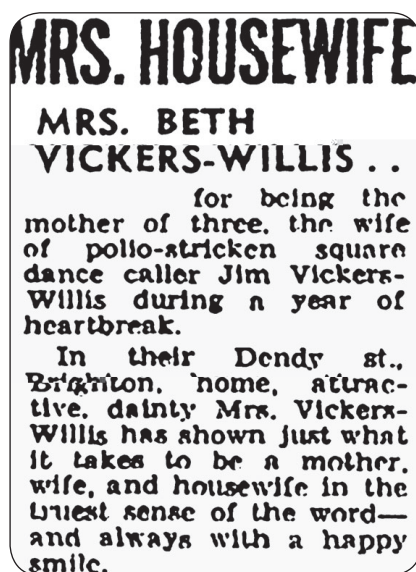
A year ago, he had polio

He hopes to raise the £30,000 by square-dance calling.

Mr. Vickers-Willis wants to "call" at more dances in Queensland and then conduct a "come-back" square-dance season in Melbourne, Adelaide, and Sydney.

When we went up to Queensland in the Stratheden, I was carried on to the ship. On the way home, I walked down the gangway.

A Melbourne newspaper, The Argus, published this much deserved comment about Beth -



A huge weight fell on Beth, with me partly crippled. She was mother, carer, housewife and handyman – doing all the man's jobs, as well as the woman's jobs, around the house. In bed I had to be tied with bandages into a Double Thomas iron frame. Beth had to bandage me, unbandage me, scratch my nose when I couldn't do it myself, etc.

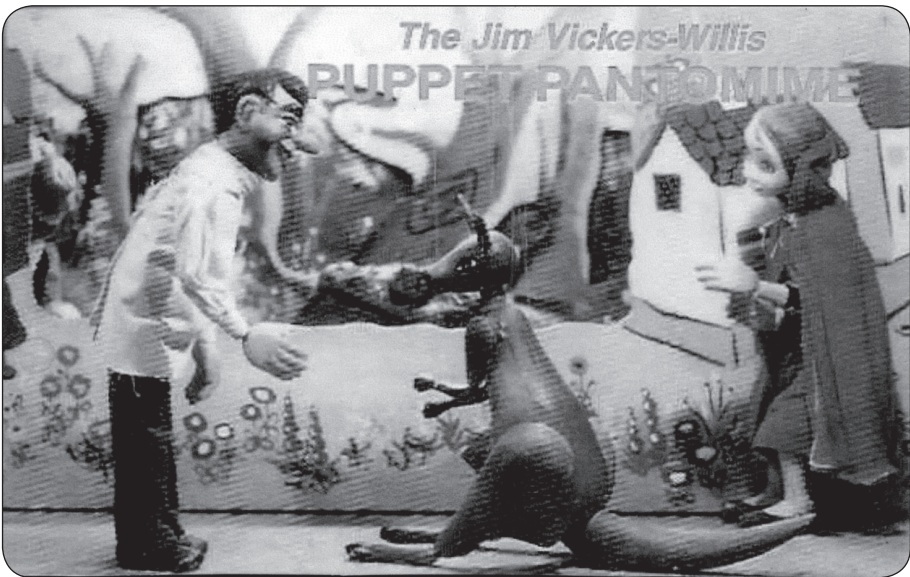
We were given amazing support – just what you need in these circumstances. The square dancers were always there.

With television about to start, I thought that puppets would become more important as, on t/v, they would be the same size

The Magic of Life

as a human In an effort to create some regular income, I bought a dictaphone I could operate with one finger and wrote plays and music for our Puppet Pantomime which we subsequently presented in the retail stores and on television – with Beth one of the main puppet voices.

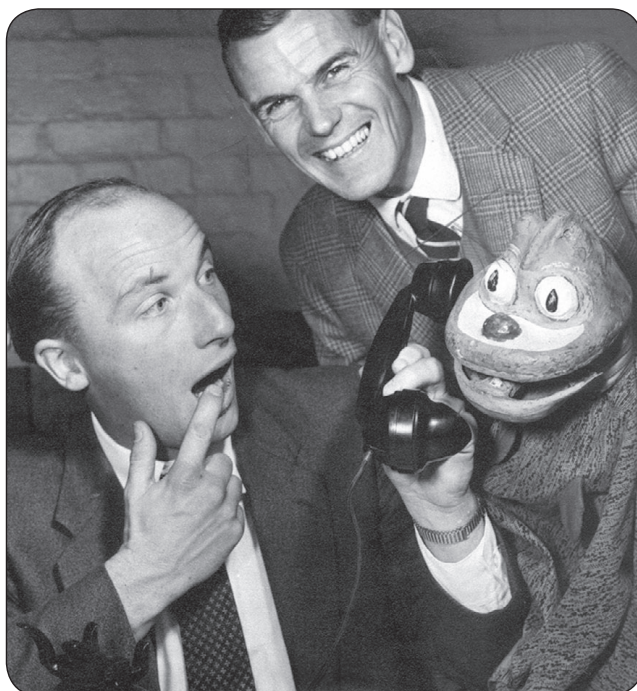
After a struggle, we got our show going and, in one week, at the Exhibition Buildings we made nine hundred and fifty pounds (\$1,900) profit. We also sold puppet cassettes.



... and operated a puppet truck which took our shows out to children's parties.

The shows in the truck were operated by two good dance friends, Jack and Ruby Garner.

Jim Vickers - Wills



● PUPPETS' VOICES ARE PROMINENT in the new 3DB Sunday morning "Jim Vickers-Willis Show" at 10.45, in which Jim returns to 3DB after an absence of five years to comper a variety session of pops, square dancing and novelty items. Here producer Peter Surrey, left, seems surprised by the 'phone conversation being carried on by one of the puppets.

We thought we were made and became the first people in our street to own a television set. We were trying to raise money to buy an electric wheelchair for a polio patient, Les Corneile, and also to buy a television set for the iron lung ward at Fairfield Hospital, ready for the official opening of television.

So we leafleted our neighbourhood inviting people to our house to watch the preliminary test programs – and bring a donation. My old newspaper, The Sun, helped.

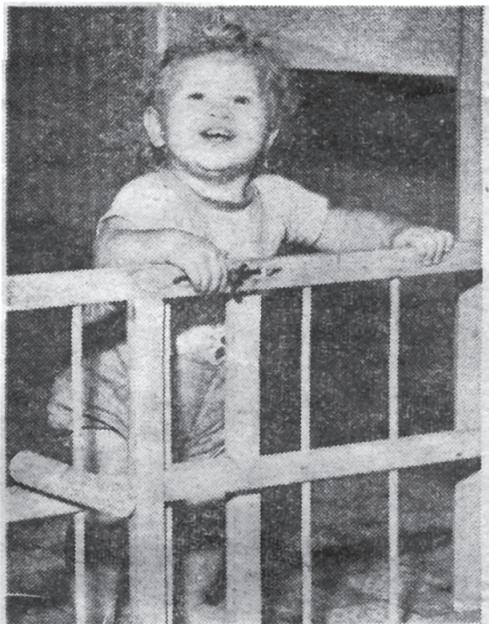
Our carpenter friend, Alf Shaw, who had built our puppet shows, made a 12-ft high stand for the Respirator Ward's t/v set, because the iron lung patients were all lying on their back.

On the opening night of television, Alf Shaw was perched precariously on a wobbly ladder trying to tune in the set. As well as the patients in the iron lungs, the ward was packed with hospital staff who had knocked off to witness this great event. When Alf finally managed to get a t/v picture, the whole place cheered.

Les Corneile put his electric wheelchair to such good use that when I met him many years later he was happily married, with three children.

I also invented a baby safety barrier which fitted doors of all sizes. We sold some hundreds but did not make much money. Others copied it and versions of it are still sold.

The 'baby stopper'



SQUARE dance caller Jim Vickers-Willis has invented a "baby stopper" which his son, James Anthony is "demonstrating" in the picture above.

Jim thought of the "baby stopper" while lying in bed for months recovering from polio.

"After baby has been in a playground for a while he became annoyed with the confined space," he said yesterday.

"I thought what a help it would be if we could put a barrier across the door, clear the floor of all swallowable and dangerous objects and make one room into a big playground."

"Many times, too, my wife, Beth, wanted to keep Tony out of the kitchen, but if she closed the door, he would scream the house down."

The baby stopper blocks doorways and dangerous steps. It can be carried more conveniently than a playground during a holiday trip and is much cheaper.

Jim plans to patent his idea, which is just becoming available throughout Australia.

Councillor Les. McCredden, Mayor of Box Hill, has started production at his factory in Box Hill.

The Magic of Life

We were manufacturing puppets, puppet sets and puppet jack-in-the-boxes but the Government changed the import duty laws overnight and the Japanese were able to land goods here cheaper than we could make them. With three children, we needed a steady income. I did part-time jobs conducting the community singing on 3DB from Brunswick Town Hall and 13 of these Friday night square dance live television shows on the ABC.



Enjoying dancing for the t/v cameras.



Caller and wife enjoy a break.

One of our major problems at this time was that I could not drive our car; Beth had to do all the driving. But, after some years, with me getting stronger, the T & G Life Society lent us one thousand pounds (\$2000) towards buying a power steering car which I could drive – and by 1959 we were in the life insurance business.

It is incredible to look back and realise I contemplated joining this great industry with horror: I had such a low opinion of insurance men!

I dutifully attended the T.& G's insurance school. Night after night I came home to Beth saying 'I can't do it; I don't believe in it', etc.

Then on the fifth day I came home and said 'get out the tel-edex; I want to ring some of our friends.' Beth said 'what for?' She was amazed and became excited when I replied 'I want to talk to them about their life insurance.'

Because I was a public figure, I had been targeted by insurance men and I myself had no less than 12 life insurance policies with three different companies. Had I died in the iron lung, Beth and the children would have been well provided for, for life.

However, with my new knowledge I looked at these policies and considered that I could have much better ones under existing tax laws. Also I found out that life offices tended to train their salesmen to sell policies that suited their business and paid larger commissions on these. For instance, term insurance only earned 10% commission whereas whole of life earned 60%; amongst savings policies, ten-year endowments earned the lowest commission and were rarely sold even though under the existing tax laws at the time they gave the best investment return.

Of course, many people needed whole of life – and Beth and I still have whole of life cover on our lives. However, it seemed to me in those days that when people needed other cover they often got whole of life.

I reversed the situation – sold a bit of whole of life but lots of term insurance and ten year endowments, all earning low commissions. A couple of chemists who dealt with me were so pleased they recommended me to others – and I gained 100 new clients, mostly chemists.

I invented what were called Marketing Tool Cassettes which took the place of cold canvassing. Beth and I took them overseas

and met the presidents of nine New York insurance companies, plus a couple in England. They were very nice to us. We stayed at the Waldorf Astoria, The Savoy and Raffles in Singapore – a great adventure. We sold thousands of our cassettes, mostly in Australia, but the biggest gain was in using them to help us in developing our own insurance business.

So another bit of magic: my horror at becoming an insurance man turned into a rewarding career, generating some of today's best friends.

Full of enthusiasm, in 1964 I studied and passed all eight subjects in one year to become the first T.& G. man to gain the new Diploma of Insurance, and, many, many years later, after studying for three years with my Accountant son Peter, passed exams at Deakin University to become a Certified Financial Planner.

Because of interest in my book writing, some financial counselling interviews finished up more like marriage guidance sessions, with couples discussing their problems and wanting to know how they compared with others I had interviewed. I gained some valuable book material!

At one of our homes I had my insurance office set up in a large steel bungalow in the back garden. Our daughter Susie kept her skewbald horse, Sunny, also in the back garden. Clarice Gerbes, my secretary for many years, always was very correct — answering the phone “Mr Vickers-Willis’ office”, making me sound like the CEO of a big company. She was on the phone talking to a client when Sunny walked through the door into the office. Clarice said “Oh excuse me, a horse has just come into the office”. I don't know what the client thought. Sunny turned around, manured on the office floor, and finally was shooed out leaving Clarrie to explain.

CHAPTER 5:

E A '

After six years in insurance (in 1965), all our back sheds burnt down. We were well insured and the money resulting enabled a visit to England. I gained a contract to 'call' shipboard square dances on the voyage in the liner Orsova, plus a contract to interview and partially train insurance consultant/migrants in London – and it led to some unexpected 'sex education'.

Pornography and other such influences are often blamed for problems which I now feel are actually caused by teaching young people distorted attitudes. It started to dawn on me at that early stage that many of the problems we have relating to sexuality stem from the untrue, unhelpful attitudes and ideas learned in our upbringing; that religions in trying to do good were actually causing great harm – and a total re-think in this area was needed.

On our way to England for a two year stay we visited Pompeii

and I – with other men on the ship – was invited to inspect the ‘dirty room’. We were charged 25 something-or-others for this privilege. Inside, on the walls, were beautiful pictures of people making love in the nude painted 3,000 years ago. Our boys were not allowed in.

Only since becoming involved in sexual research have I realized the likely significance: when those pictures were created – plus all the other thousands of paintings and sculptures adorning temples and ancient buildings – some were a form of art – some of them a form of sexual visual stimulation and some education: young ones could look up at the walls and learn how it was done – without guilt or fear or doubt. This was how the elders passed on the necessary information in the cultures of the past. I began to feel that in our modern repressed, distorted culture, what was once a form of art and sexual education for many people had been turned into ‘filth’ – the modern name we have for it being ‘pornography’. One Aussie, on seeing a painting of oral sex, said: ‘I didn’t think they knew how to do that 3000 years ago’.

As I said, our boys were not allowed into the Pompeii ‘erotic’ chamber. They saw their fathers going into this ‘dirty room’ and peering guiltily at the paintings. I thought ‘What better way to distort the thinking and attitudes of our children?’

The ‘decent’, ‘moral’ people took our money happily for the guilty peep show which apparently brought in regular income for the religious charity they represented. It reminded me of some of our media, particularly the tabloids who feign shock and outrage as they sell their product based on lots of scandals and boobs.

'ORGASMS ARE GOOD FOR YOU'

Twelve years after my experience with the Adelaide chemists, at age 47 (1965), I decided to buy my first book on sex – in a Wimbledon book shop. The book I bought at the time was banned in Australia. I felt so guilty buying it that I turned it over the wrong way, so that the bookseller would not notice what I was buying.

After reading it, I told my wife that there was about one third of what was in the book I did not know about and I considered we were passing on a lot of dangerous ignorance to our teenage children.

Being an ex-journalist, I decided to write a book about it and, after interviewing a number of people, gave a little talk to about 25 women in Wimbledon. They were a friendly audience and encouraged me – asking many questions and showing interest in improvement of their own sexual experience, which I had not expected.

I decided to entitle the book 'Orgasms Are Good For You'. At that time (1966) the word orgasm caused much embarrassment, in fact was practically never used. My family and friends were so shocked that I was writing a book to this title that I changed it to 'Are You (Really) Fun To Live With?' when the book was published 7 years later.

In one early interview I saw a six year old daughter covering up her breasts with a towel. She didn't have any breasts. Where did she learn to be ashamed of them even before she had them? I saw this in further detail in discussions with nudists at a nudist camp (see 'let's get it all off – for *goodness* sake!', ahead) .

I started to ask: 'Isn't the rubbish about penis size and breast shape and sizes one of the ways in which we 'circumcise' our kids' minds?' When we tell jokes about this subject should we

be considering the attitudes we are encouraging in the young ones – attitudes which might lead on to lack of self-esteem and sometimes later to other consequences such as impotence and even suicide.

As I talked to meetings there were many questions, but I started to ask some back: 'Are you passing on to your kids the right attitudes which will make their lives happy and successful? Are you spoiling your own chances of getting the most out of your golden midlife years together? Are your attitudes heading you towards unnecessary loneliness in later life?'

It gradually dawned on me: Here I had a story – 'life altering attitudes' – which affected everyone but had not yet been told. This aroused my old reporter instincts – a scoop!

My psychologist son Tony said that I showed anger in some of my early writing about this subject. I feel I was angry when I first started. As I set about interviewing scores and then hundreds of people, what I was hearing made me even more angry. I found myself describing some of the uptight hypocritical people, who seemed to hold big sway in our society, as 'perverted prudes'.

Hopefully, I've calmed down now and can even feel sympathy with some people because their negative destructive attitudes about sex must have deprived them of an awful lot of happiness in their own lives. I was gaining information from people in many diverse areas and starting to ask questions and receive answers including:

ALCOHOLISM:

Does sexuality play a part in some alcoholism? Author of 23 books, psychiatrist Dr Caprio: 'I've yet to treat a woman with a drinking problem that I did not find an accompanying sexual problem.' I wondered how many men this may apply to also.

PROSTITUTION:

Amongst many revealing interviews with prostitutes, one said: 'I look startled when the wife of my client greets me at the front door and she says 'It's alright dearie; he's upstairs waiting for you.' I found that some prostitutes appeared to understand male sexual problems better than most people and, in fact, some I talked to appeared to act like therapists.

INCEST:

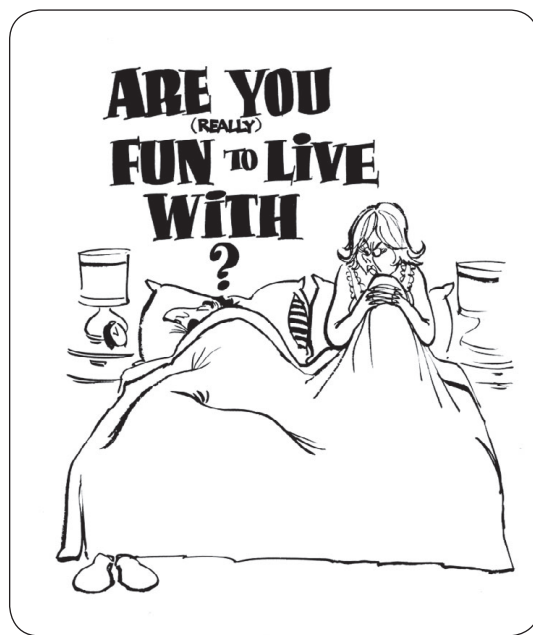
In at least one case, incest by a father appeared to have been approved by his wife who was happy to see the daughter providing her husband with the sex that she did not want.

'MOW THE LAWN' SYNDROME

In London and later in Australia I encountered many cases of men who complained they were 'too tired' or 'too busy' for sex with their wives.

I liked to tell the story of one evening when the family accidentally 'lost' me on the road in England near Windsor Great Park and I had to ride my large adult tricycle home. By the time I got home, it was midnight: at the age of 49 and with a fairly badly paralysed right leg and a fully paralysed right arm, plus fairly defective breathing capacity, I had ridden my tricycle a total of 30 miles. A quick bath and then into bed for some happy sexual activity. I sometimes told that story to men when they told me that the reason they didn't want sex was because they were 'too tired'.

Of course they felt tired. They were not putting it on; but was it perhaps sometimes just like the tired feeling one gets when one's wife says: 'Would you mow the lawn?'



TO LOURDES FOR A CURE:

Our great friend in Wimbledon, Bernard Feltham, a Roman Catholic who believed in carrying out the ideals of his religion and was always doing everybody good turns (we used to call him 'old do-gooder'), was very anxious to take me to Lourdes. I think he hoped that I would be bathed in Lourdes water, and my paralysed arm and leg and breathing would be cured.

Eventually he managed to induce me to go with him because there was an English girl going who had multiple sclerosis, and, as she was not a Catholic, Bernard said he felt my presence would help. At least that was his story.

So we flew over to Lourdes – a 3 1/2 hour flight – 70 Roman Catholics and this girl and I. The girl was in a wheelchair.

And the miracles? Examining all the testimony at Lourdes, one would find it hard to deny that there has been plenty of evidence of miracle healings in the past. Some of the evidence was signed by as many as 20 doctors. I bathed in the freezing cold Lourdes water but I did not show any signs of a miracle – although someone might point out that it was at this point that I became involved in sexual education.

Just like a miracle, around this time, in the mid 1960s, I happened to hear a record by the American psychologist, Dr. Murray Banks – a great man who opened many minds with his combination of knowledge, insight and humour. It prompted me to go out and buy the excellent marriage guidance book – which at the time was banned in Australia..

I read parts of this book quite guiltily sitting beside the road in Wimbledon on my tricycle. Subsequently I recalled that moment when people asked me to buy books on sex, or vibrators, for them, because they were frightened to buy them for themselves. I have now bought more than 30 vibrators for various people.

I felt that some of the difficulties we and our friends were having in our lives were linked to this information I had just gained. In fact there was a large area of disagreement about the whole subject even within my family. When I announced the book title ‘Orgasms are Good for You’ that really caused consternation, to say the least!

My title – which I think was a very appropriate one even though I subsequently did not use it – and which Australian entrepreneur Harry M. Miller once praised – came about because I had been reading about Dr. Wilhelm Reich, a psychoanalyst, who was formerly a student of Freud. He died in the

1950s after making certain statements that, at the time, were mostly derided by the various authorities.

One of the things he seemed to be suggesting stuck in my mind: He considered that in our society men and women did not get adequate *fulfilling* sexual expression – because of the taboos and the misinformation and the unnatural ideas and attitudes which had been foisted on all of us from past generations. He said that this lack of satisfactory sexual expression could cause people not only unhappiness but also ill health.

He said that when the human body did not get adequate sexual satisfaction, it sometimes suffered ‘dis-ease’, and one of the diseases he named was cancer. Now that made me think: Were people who were more relaxed and satisfied in their relationships less likely to suffer illness, including cancer? Aside from sex, were people who had a satisfying ‘connection’ – be it with a person or a passionate pursuit – likely to be more healthy and happy?

Now, more than fifty years after Dr Reich, and forty years after I wrote that ‘shocking’ book title “Orgasms are good for you”, our daily newspaper reports:

“The British Government’s patients helpline, National Health Service Direct says regular sex brings health rewards from staying fit and burning calories to combating cancer. ‘Orgasms even release painkillers into the bloodstream, helping keep mild illnesses like colds and aches and pains at bay and produce extra oestrogen and testosterone hormones’, the British Health Service says. ‘These hormones will keep your bones and muscles healthy, leaving you feeling fabulous inside and out. The increased production of the hormones will make your hair shine and your skin smooth.’ The report adds that

after-sex has great benefits ‘being one of the few times you’ll completely let go, surrender and relax.’

I wonder: do we sometimes substitute comforters such as cigarettes, alcohol, drugs for this natural release which is made available by Nature?

Those who cannot be bothered working on their partner relationship to improve it, might take more interest if they read one book by a psychoanalyst and doctor. It quoted a number of case histories of patients with everything from blood pressure to mental disturbance, heart trouble and ulcers. Their condition had been improved, and sometimes entirely cured, the doctor claimed, simply by regulating the sex life between the partners.

ACHILLES HEEL

The many interviews produced questions:

- Is one of the main motivations of some religions establishing the control of men over women?
- Is the fact that child abuse repeats in families caused more by the passing on of family attitudes than by the effects of the actual abuse?
- Are the “demeaning of sex” attitudes – which simply caused reduction of happiness in stable marriages of the past – preventing young ones from recognising the importance of respecting their sexual relationship as a great aid in holding them together? In fact, in the present very different wedded circumstances, are these passed-on attitudes the Achilles Heel of modern marriage?



CHAPTER 6:

E A D D A C

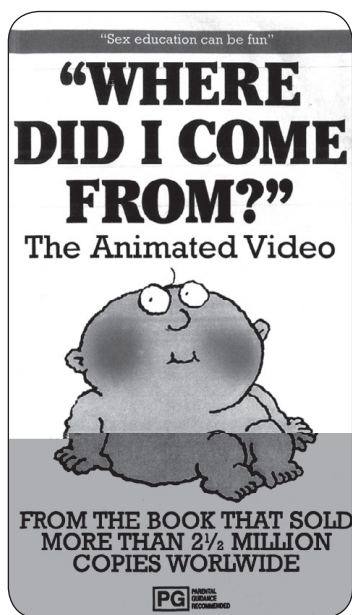
Back in Australia, as part of the intensive book research which developed and quickly took up a great deal of my time, I sat in a circle of young male prisoners at Turana Youth Training Centre, in Melbourne, and listened to story after story showing complete lack of respect for women – and for their own sexuality: ‘I get ten bucks just for bending over at King’s Cross.’

I said to myself ‘But these boys must have had parents; how did they come to feel so badly about their sexuality at this young age?’

I suppose I have seen the answer many times when out addressing meetings: sometimes there may be as many as 500 people, and I will always say: ‘if you spend thousands of dollars sending your children to the most expensive schools, you won’t do them as much good as if you spend a small amount buying

this video cassette and showing it to them many times between the age of 3 and 7.

I will hold up this brilliant, wholesome, amusing, very accurate children's sex education video 'Where Did I Come From?', and say I will get it for them at cost price if they come up to the platform at the conclusion.



Out of 500 people, maybe two sets of parents will come up; the rest obviously just don't think it's necessary, or important enough.

SOLUTION NO 1: make sure all children in your family see this video, or similar, *a number of times between age 3 and 7*, and discuss it with you like any other important matter in their upbringing, such as their manners, health or studies.

I went into the Poplar House Maximum Security Prison for young people to speak to about 20 prisoners. They looked a pretty rough lot – about half white and half black. However, they listened very attentively and asked many questions.

After a couple of hours, they wanted some more time, and lunch had to be delayed to allow this.

At one point I told them about my television ad. in which I had used the 4-letter word 'kill' and had said 'Can you think of anything more obscene than one human being killing another human being?'

Afterwards, I found out that amongst that group I was addressing there were 9 murderers!

At the conclusion, about half of those prisoners came up to me, shook my hand in a gentlemanly fashion and thanked me. I will not forget them.

A few weeks later I was invited to speak to about half of the boys at one of the most prestigious boys colleges in Melbourne and I told them how I had been speaking at the Maximum Security Prison – and the questions asked and the courtesy I received were just the same as I was receiving at the College.

ONE PARENT OBJECTS

Whenever a school principal invited me to talk to pupils I always said 'Yes'. After scores of interviews I had come to feel that things such as pornography often were blamed for problems, but it seemed to me that the most important factor was what we taught our children while they were little and growing up – by our attitudes, our information and our example.

After I had spoken to two local school classes which were amalgamated for the occasion, I went into the teachers' room. Several of the teachers at that school had taken time off to be present at the sex education session, and they expressed

amazement at the intelligent questions asked by the children, and how quiet and attentive the children were.

Of course – this discussion was about one of the most important and interesting parts of life, and the young ones, who were not yet bound down by adult hypocrisy, recognized it and were just at that magical learning stage.

The teachers were full of praise and gratitude after the session – but I was never invited back to that school again: it turned out that one parent had rung up the Headmaster and complained that I had spoken about masturbation in my talk. One parent!

On these talks and on the radio and sometimes on the television, I started asking the question: ‘when we pass on distorted attitudes and information about their sexuality to young people, in some cases can this lead in their later life to distorted actions such as rape, sex crimes, child abuse, etc.? Is it that when we give them no information – and leave a vacuum of ignorance – into that vacuum are likely to sweep rotten ideas and attitudes?’

Beth and I for a few years, shared a Sunday school class at St.Leonard’s Church in Brighton. We had the biggest, roughest and most enthusiastic class of 10 to 11 year-old boys. We split the job between us. Beth was the public relations. She knew everything about the boys, in typical Beth fashion, while I prepared and presented the lessons. We loved those boys – and they turned up week after week with very little absenteeism so that our group was usually the best attended. We were definitely not good standard Sunday School teachers but we generated a lot of enthusiasm.

Robert Menzies, Grandson of Sir Robert Menzies, the Prime Minister of Australia, was a very alert and interesting pupil.

Subjects we covered were family relationships, safe driving on the road, vandalism, cigarette smoking and drinking. One morning I asked the class what did King Solomon have besides 1,000 wives. The answer I was looking for was 'wisdom'. One 11 year-old popped up and said: 'He must have had a mighty big bed sir!'

I started to compare what I was actually seeing and hearing in real life interviews with what was being taught and said about sex in the church – which I now realised could not possibly be God's word because it was not true. For me this was like a flash of light.

I started to speak about the effect 'conservative' religious doctrines were having on the daily lives of women and children in particular across the world. I wrote a newspaper article headed up 'Let's come clean on sex – for God's sake!' I felt that much of what was being laid down in the general community about sexuality was not only wrong; it was very destructive. In religious terms I felt it could only be described as 'the work of the devil', as it was having evil long-term results – disconnecting some young ones from the church and undoing some of the good done by the magnificent religious welfare/social services.

I subsequently publicly suggested that teaching guilt, and, in particular, teaching that masturbation was a mortal sin, could cause adult problems including child sexual abuse – and *that priests who engaged in this were just the victims of their own mis-teaching*. That was 1970.

We had a very happy wedding day when our daughter Sue married Rob, who made her laugh and who was much liked in our family. They set up their home a few miles away and set about starting a family. We had no inkling of the disaster ahead in their family life.

In every spare moment from my business, I went on writing, interviewing and speaking, and was passed from one group to another - Rotary Clubs, Lions Clubs, women's groups, schools, breakfast meetings, etc. In almost every case I experienced a positive reception - and many questions. I learnt as much as anyone from these speaking engagements.

Then my wife left me.

Nothing that has ever happened in my life shook me like this.

What occurred after that turned out to be one of the most valuable experiences of my life, although at the time it was not only very painful but frightening. Since then, when people have phoned me, telling me of their difficulties ('my daughter is pregnant', or 'my son has V.D.', 'my wife has left me', 'I am thinking of committing suicide', etc) I have truthfully been able to say: 'I know just how you feel'.

So, what was at that time the most terrible experience of my life, turned out to be most valuable. Beth had gone off into hiding - taking a job under an assumed name as a kitchen maid in a charity hostel. It was a live-in position and she had a pretty hard time - but in typical Beth fashion, she soon made friends.

I remained at home with the two boys, and, night after night, I could not sleep. I walked around my bedroom at 4 o'clock in the morning, not knowing what to do. Over the years, whenever anybody in the family had sleeping tablets or similar drugs, and ceased using them, I would take the bottle and hide it in the back of my drawer as a precaution against somebody taking an overdose. Consequently, quite a large quantity of sleeping tablets had accumulated at the back of this drawer. I was terribly depressed, but never did it cross my mind to take my life. Later in life I supported enacting legislation to legalise

medically supervised voluntary euthanasia (which in practice mostly appeared to be palliative care until the patient died peacefully) to end the sufferings of the hopelessly disabled or those with painful terminal illness.

After five days and nights of virtually not sleeping at all, a doctor prescribed some sedatives, and I took these for the next ten days. The trouble for me, although I did not recognize it at the time, was that, as well as being my wife, Beth had become my mother substitute – and when she went away Little Jimmy lost not only his wife but also his mummy!

I also lost my regular sex relationship. We had been having sex two or three times a week. I always enjoyed it, but Beth not as often. Not surprisingly, in those days Beth wanted less than I did – a situation I found applied to many couples, sometimes in the opposite direction. Beth was age 42 and I age 51.

One trouble was that, like many men, I had been conned by misinformation including talk of ‘wankers’ etc. and I did not masturbate at that stage (which was part of our problem) – and so after 23 years of steady sex life, I suddenly found myself totally deprived. (Later in life I resumed masturbating).

Like so many husbands and wives, when they get to this situation, I also found that I was completely unready to go out into the social world. I had no idea how to relate to another woman; I had never even kissed another woman for 23 years. Also, because I had one partially paralysed leg, one arm that was paralysed and my other arm useful but still partly paralysed – and because my wife leaving me only proved conclusively to me that I was totally unattractive – I felt that no-one would want me.

The fact that I was writing a book about sex had played a part in bringing our marriage differences to a head. Regularly, friends and relatives had been saying things to me like:

‘Oh, can’t we talk about something other than sex; you are a sex maniac, Jim.’ I found in family groups – and particularly amongst groups of men – that dirty jokes about sex were O.K., but any serious discussion caused people to become embarrassed and look at you as though there was something peculiar about you. This was 1970.

After Beth left me, I went through an extreme period of self-doubt. I actually threw 900 pages of my first book in the incinerator, and burned them. The line that was so often used, ‘You are a sex maniac’ would make me go to ground like a naughty little boy.

However, after interviewing hundreds of people in all walks of life, and having many come to me and pour out their difficulties, mostly caused by plain ignorance and misinformation, I later reached a stage where nobody could possibly restrain me from telling what I felt I had found out about human sexuality. I sometimes would reply: ‘Oh, no, I’m not a sex maniac; you are an anti-sex maniac – and there are millions like you; that’s the real problem.’ This did not add to my popularity.

I went up to Sydney for a few weeks to try and develop my business up there, while giving Beth a chance to go home and be with the children.

Then I went through the most traumatic weeks of my life. My sister Joan very kindly drove with me up to Sydney and established me in a hotel in Double Bay. However, when she returned to Melbourne, I found myself a room in a boarding house.

I became aware of a side of life I had never before seen: That boarding house was owned and run by an elderly couple. I had a room that was reached by a very narrow steep flight of stairs with only one railing. The room had an old-fashioned glass cabinet in one corner with a couple of broken panes of glass –

and every time I took a step in the room they would rattle. I had three suitcases, a typewriter and a dictaphone/tape recorder.

Like many other people, I had for many years been living a sheltered, comfortable family life with plenty of love and company; all of a sudden I was alone, and really didn't know how to cope.

In this boarding house there were many people living – particularly elderly people, all alone. I came to know one or two of them and found that just about all they had in life was their television set – and perhaps enough money to travel across Sydney, once a month, to visit a daughter, son or other relative.

I realized that part of the solution of my difficulties (I was very depressed and finding it hard to sleep) was to work industriously and so I set about trying to build up as many insurance clients as I could in Sydney. I didn't do very well because I didn't have my usual enthusiasm!

Nevertheless I kept going – and often I would return from a client late at night. There would be a light in the hall of the boarding house. The door of every room would be closed and there would be nobody around to talk to.

I would carry my insurance bag in my teeth so that I could use my one workable hand to grip the railing of those steep stairs (on the way down I used to throw my bag down into the hall and it was all rather dangerous with my wonky legs). I was not used to cooking for myself and was feeling so depressed that I had little appetite anyway. I felt that I might have a nervous breakdown – but I kept remembering what Dr. Murray Banks had said in a talk 'There is no such thing as a nervous breakdown; show me the nerve that breaks down!'

At that stage, I visited a Sydney psychiatrist, in Macquarie Street, and he in conjunction with a Melbourne psychiatrist I knew slightly, caused me to believe I was a serious case in

need of treatment. I cannot remember the exact terms used, but I know that between them these doctors frightened me and added a further great burden to my confused thinking.

Today, having interviewed many psychiatrists over a period of years and looking back, I can see that those two – who were both very experienced – failed to diagnose my problem as one of need of personal growth, and that no drugs were going to achieve the growth necessary for me to be able to cope better.

When I questioned the treatment by one psychiatrist he actually used the words, 'Intensive therapy' and 'suicidal' – and even in my very uncertain state these words failed to ring true, and made me feel doubtful. For one thing, I had always known that there was no way I would ever be likely to commit suicide – unless suffering from hopeless terminal cancer, or hopelessly old and incapable, or facing torture by the Gestapo, or some such. I look back now and realize I had a very lucky escape.

Had I gone along the road prescribed by the psychiatrists I would have entered into long-term expensive therapy, probably culminating in shock treatment. This whole episode formed an important part of my experience.

Now that I have interviewed large numbers of psychiatrists, I have become familiar with the way they go about their work, and the help they can give. However, like most people in the community faced with mental health difficulties, I was quite unaware of how psychiatrists worked and my contact with them was upsetting and rather frightening. As I look back now, I can see that they tried to label me according to their textbook medical training. Had I gone along with the prescribed treatment, I believe I might have been taking drugs to this day as many do (I was told Australia has the largest usage of sleeping tablets in the world).

Psychologist Dr. Francis Macnab, Director of the Cairn-millar Institute in Melbourne – who wrote the foreword to my first book – so aptly observed in one of his books ('Setting People Free') that many people who were labelled as being 'psychotic' really needed somebody to 'hold their hand'.

That applied to me, because I had grown up with some pretty wrong values: I loved my wife, yet our marriage was torn apart by the same sort of problems which afflict millions of other couples, and my own personal development at that time made it very hard to cope with the loneliness which resulted. In other words, I was depressed – and for very good reasons.

Fortunately for me, I found someone to 'hold my hand' – and it turned out to be a woman of 70, who was the ex-wife of a Viennese psychiatrist.

My surroundings were so depressing that I answered a couple of advertisements offering other boarding accommodation. At one place I met the 70-year-old Rena. She was very kind and said she would take me as a boarder. She was living all alone and obviously had some difficulties herself.

After talking to her for an hour, I told her about Beth and how depressed I was, and I said I felt I should not live with her because it might only add to her own problems. She replied: 'As soon as you came in, Jim, I could see from your eyes that there was something seriously wrong'. We shelved the matter of my boarding there, and she made a date for me to have afternoon tea with her about 10 days later.

I then continued working hard, missing meals and becoming more and more depressed. This became worse when the elderly proprietors of my boarding house found that I was writing a book on sex, and gave me notice to leave.

No doubt in their eyes I seemed a strange fellow: I could not

walk very well, and one arm was hanging in the breeze; I was suffering with the difficulties which all crippled people face – that some in the community judge them to be substandard mentally, simply because they have some slightly odd-looking physical defect.

That afternoon, I had a date to have afternoon tea with Rena. When I got to her door she took one look at me and said: 'Jim, you look like death warmed up! What has happened to you?' Then she took me inside her modern little flat and sat me down at the kitchen table. She fetched food and cut it up for me, sat down and said: 'You not talk; you eat!'

She sat over me like a mother, and I ate the first real meal I'd had for some time. It was delicious: cold meat and vegetables, and fresh buttered rolls and coffee. Then she sat down and talked with me for hours on end.

She insisted that I stayed to board with her, which I was very glad to do.

Rena was an attractive, motherly woman of the world – who in her time had had lovers, and one or two husbands. Unlike the psychiatrists, she realized that I had been sheltered; that my fixed ideas and values had not shown up in the past – but they had found me out and now I needed to make a re-assessment; personality growth was essential so that I could adjust to the new life forced upon me.

So we talked, and I started to eat heartily and feel much better. Subsequently, when about to return to Melbourne I tried to pay her for my board. She put her hands on my shoulders and said: 'I not take money from you, Jim; it a pleasure'.

Rena died a little later, and I wrote to her relatives. I hope I was able to convey to them the extent of my gratitude to this beautiful woman.

Beth had now gone to live temporarily with her Mother. I came home.

It was about three months before I really started to get out into the world and meet people – and a wonderful community-based organization called P.W.P. (Parents Without Partners) helped this come about.

I was already in touch with this group and arranging to do square dances for them when Beth left me. One day I turned up at their office and said ‘I am now one of you!’ They invited me to go to a function that night and, as the girl who invited me was charming, I went. It turned out that she was announcing her engagement to the secretary of the function that night!

However, I saw another beautiful girl standing by the wall and to my astonishment at the end of the night the club president brought her over and introduced her saying that she would like to meet me. I could not believe my good luck.

However, despite meeting this charming girl and another with whom I formed a close relationship during that year, I was very lonely and missing Beth. The girls I met knew this and respected it. I used to dream about Beth – being out riding in the car in the country with her with the kids, etc. – and would wake up full of happiness, only to realise that she wasn’t there.

Various people around us took sides – some condemning me for what they saw as my faults and others supporting me against Beth. The ones I liked the most were those who said: ‘We’re sorry to hear about it Jim, and we just hope it will all come together again.’



CHAPTER 7:

E C E A D

F E D

In the ensuing paragraphs I am going to leave out the names of some of the women involved, for obvious reasons. One or two of them have now remarried. In all other respect the stories are true.

Because I had been very ignorant about sex and had gone straight into marriage, there was a big gap in my education which was now about to be filled. There is no doubt I could not have later written books about sexuality, and made sexual information cassettes, had I lacked this experience.

One of the first encounters was particularly valuable because it concerned impotence. Over the years about every third man who came to see me told me he was suffering or had suffered from impotence or premature ejaculation. The community is riddled with these problems, and they cause great distress.

Having had a perfect erection every time I made love

throughout my 23 years of marriage, I got into bed with a woman who was some years younger than my wife. Then I got a terrible shock: I could not get an erection at all! At one stage I lay on my back and this girl sat on me and said: 'Go, go Jim', but the more she urged me on, the more I shrivelled up. I was shocked and humiliated.

This girl was kind enough to get back into bed with me again the following Saturday night, and the same thing happened. She said: 'You must be feeling guilty over Beth; that's what's wrong'. Well, I couldn't see this: Beth had left me and, at that point, I still thought I had been a pretty terrific husband! So I couldn't see really how I could be feeling guilty.

Of course, I didn't know in those days that a major cause of impotence in men is 'performance pressure': When a man feels he is under pressure to perform he is likely to fail. On this occasion I was very anxious to succeed with this girl, because I wanted her to get back into bed with me again. I had never felt this pressure with my wife; she was always there anyway. Also I was worried about my attractiveness – or lack of it – and this girl, as it happened, when she first met me, told me about another man who had suffered from impotence in bed with her. She joked about it. No doubt this was in my mind also.

Anyway, she was good enough to get back into bed with me on the third Saturday night. I managed to get a sort of half-baked erection, she had a couple of orgasms – and I was never more thankful about anything in my life!

This jolting personal experience has proved so valuable in retrospect when men have come to me with impotence problems. I have been able to say: 'I know just how you feel'. Over and over again, when they get me on their own, men have said to me: 'Oh, of course the real trouble with me is that my penis

is too small'. I have tried to stop myself from laughing, then because it happens so often. I say: 'Mine too!' Then I add: 'we'd all like to have a 40-foot long penis – but so what? The size of your penis doesn't matter anyway – that is unless you have a woman who has been indoctrinated to believe that a large penis is necessary'.

I believe men look at their own penis from above and it looks small; they see other men's penises from a more favourable angle!

This wrong value, this inaccurate and positively dangerous idea that the size of one's penis is vital in sexual intercourse, is part of the rubbish which has been passed on from past generations to spoil the happiness of millions today.

The truth is that a woman's clitoris – which gives her much of her sexual pleasure – is located at the entrance to the vagina, and the shortest penis is long enough to stimulate this.

In fact, much of the impotence problem is the result of performance pressure caused by belief that a man must have a big erect penis to satisfy a woman; it is, of course, compounded by the nonsense which has cast doubts and taboos on all types of coital positions other than the one where the male lies on top.

If everyone is forced to have sex this way, then, of course, it is absolutely essential that the male should have a good, strong erection – but even then the statistics show that the chances of enjoyable sexual expression for both partners are small. No wonder there has been so much tragic failure in marriage sexual relationships of the past generations; no wonder there has been so little magic to report..

What is so astonishing about it is that the people who have been imposing these restrictions and making it harder for men and women to enjoy their long term sex lives, have

at the same time so often been thundering forth about the 'sanctity of marriage'.

Like many others who have lost a partner, I found I was needing to make new rules so that my life would work: I met a girl of 27 at a dance. She was tall and pretty, and I was quite surprised when she agreed to have all the rest of the dances with me (I was 51). I invited her out to dinner and afterwards she asked me back to her home, adding that her children were away and she was all alone. We drank some claret and were quite happy, and I told her I was feeling very lonely and I would like to sleep with her although not necessarily to have sexual relationships with her. She said she was lonely, too, and we agreed to go to bed but it was understood that we were not going to have sex.

Well, we both undressed, turning our backs on each other, and climbed into bed! I kept my side of the bargain and did not attempt to have sex with her but, after about 20 minutes, she suddenly put her arms around me and said: 'Please would you give me a climax; my husband left me months ago and I have not had any sex'.

And so away I went into action and in a very short time she had an orgasm which was so terrific that she just about fell out of bed! By this time I had done practically nothing, but when I went to cuddle up to her further, she didn't want me near her. I can see now that she probably had her own sexual problems – and this may have had some bearing on her husband being an alcoholic. Anyway, there I was in bed with this girl – and she was apparently satisfied, but I wasn't!

Then I started to think about it all: here I was in my fifties in bed with a girl aged about 27. It all seemed rather strange.

A week or so before, a member of P.W.P had said to me: 'You

want to watch out, Jim; some of these girls will get you into bed with them and then all of a sudden their husband will turn up and catch you – and you will have to pay for all their divorce proceedings.’

This sort of thing was going through my mind – and I started to worry because I was anxious to reunite with my wife as soon as I could, and I didn’t want to get into a big divorce scandal and spoil my chances.

I was half awake and half asleep most of the night. Then at about 5 o’clock in the morning there was a crunch of car tyres on the drive right outside the bedroom window.

The girl sat up in bed and said: ‘Christ’. She jumped out and ran to the window and said, ‘it’s ?X!\$’. I couldn’t understand what name she had said, but she threw on her dressing gown and told me, ‘Stay there and keep quiet!’

I heard her open the front door and then steps clomped past the bedroom door out into the kitchen. Then I heard the clank of bottles and glasses. Any moment I expected a big brawny husband to come in and attack me! After about 10 minutes she opened the bedroom door and hissed: ‘Get dressed and go home, it’s !\$?!X’ – again I couldn’t figure out the name.

So I got dressed in the semi-darkness, crept out of the house and got into my car – which I had fortunately parked outside the next-door house – and at about 5.30 in the morning I drove off home, very thankfully.

My sister Joan later called this ‘The pornographic part’ of my life. I was missing my marriage sexual relationship and badly needing company and companionship, but at the same time I wanted to get back with Beth, so I wasn’t seeking a long-term steady girlfriend. I remember one of my girlfriends commenting at the Easter holiday break: ‘the lucky married people, they’ve got someone to spend the holiday with.’

THE LONELY HEART WAS LEARNING ITS LESSON

At that stage of life, like many husbands and wives, I can see that I tended to look at my partner to find the cause of our problems. I would say things like: 'Oh, yes, of course it's a joint thing; we are both at fault, everyone contributes to the problems in a marriage' – but this was really just lip service. I really felt I had done a good job through our difficulties; I had never even thought of being unfaithful, and in fact up till now had not kissed another girl for 23 years.

As far as the sexual part of our relationship was concerned, my wife called me 'ever-ready' (like the battery).

The fact that a good erection was not the be-all and end-all of the physical sexual relationship had not occurred to my male mind; the fact – as clearly demonstrated by the Hite Report, and also by vast amounts of clinical research – that most women are more easily 'turned on' by things other than vaginal penetration with the penis, was totally unknown to me.

Beth had not had her father in her teens. Beth's Mother lost her husband when Beth was age 9, and never remarried. I felt there were some negative attitudes on Beth's side which handicapped us. At the time I did not realise that I had probably contributed to most of them. The fact that to a large extent I was treating my wife as a mother replacement (being a good little boy to her and always doing the right thing) and the fact that women are turned on sexually by men, and not by 'good little boys', was also something that I had not thought about.

Of course, we also both had a lot to learn about our expectations in marriage – and about our basic values.

We reflected some common attitudes: I have found that so often couples with problems pushed the whole matter of sex under the carpet; it was as if they were ashamed of admitting

to a sexual problem; it was too personal. They would find some other problem/excuse. So often they would say 'Oh no, it's nothing to do with our sex; that's quite alright'.

Typical was the florist who was having difficulties in his marriage and his wife said 'Our sexual relationship – that's one thing that's okay.' When I asked her what she meant by 'okay' she added 'Every Friday night, regular as clockwork.' Then she added a further line 'There's just one thing that's a bit unusual about it – Tim never gets there until after I'm asleep.' So, that was their version of 'satisfactory'. I encountered this type of reasoning quite regularly.

Into my life at this time came two gorgeous women. One was a single professional girl in her 40's. She had been terribly inhibited all her life and, in fact, someone at her work described her to me as a 'man hater'.

She told me she had only had sex once – when she was aboard a ship and she did it because she felt she was getting older and should find out what it was all about. She didn't use any contraceptives on that one occasion and when I asked whether she enjoyed the experience, she replied: 'No, I didn't feel anything and I thought what a fuss everybody makes about nothing.' Well, she was far from a man hater. She gave me much happiness and there's no doubt that I loved her as far as I was able – and would now if she were still alive.

I always have a certain amount of difficulty in physical sexual relationships because of my physical handicap (one arm and one leg paralysed) – and I appreciate kind, thoughtful women very much. One night we were making love at the 40-year-old's house and we rolled out of bed. I got so tangled up in the sheets that I could not get up off the floor – and eventually she had to grip me by the shoulders and lift me. Fortunately she was pretty

strong! I am glad to say before she died she was very happily married, as we found out when we rang her in later years and chatted to her on the phone on her birthday each year.

HANDICAP A VALUABLE SELECTIVE FACTOR

I found that my physical handicap became a selective factor – and quite a good one. I had to have girls who were considerate enough to accept me the way I was – sometimes able to make love better using a desk with a mattress on it or something similar. In one motel, we used to turn the drawers upside down and they provided a desk extension of just the right height. Once or twice we forgot to turn them back the right way up – and I often wondered what the next users of the room thought!

I came to realise that if one had a handicap of some type and dealt with it effectively and got on with life, the right sort of partner was likely to see it as a strength.

Because sometimes people have come to me believing that physical sexual success would surely make a partner become keen on them, it really interested me that on one occasion I made love with a girl and she had at least 15 orgasms. The next week I phoned her to take her out and she was booked up elsewhere!

On one occasion I went from Melbourne to Sydney in just the way I had always wanted – by car, with a nice girl, taking three days to get there; swimming in a river, stopping at all the interesting looking stalls, buying food for picnics and finishing up with a memorable happy trip.

It was also an interesting experience for me to meet women who had just left their husbands and they would go to a P.W.P. dance and be very glad to meet another man who was often very similar to their husband. He would have just left his wife and would choose a new woman who was often similar to her!

Then they would set to work and be a great sexual success! Why could they not do this at home with their own spouses?

I came to the conclusion that one reason was *marriage habits* – *which they had often picked up from their parents*. One wife said her husband was very generous before marriage and ‘mean as a pikestaff’ after marriage. She added, that his father had been mean with his mother. Others I heard wore long ugly nighties and tatty pyjamas, would go to bed unshaven and smelling of beer, etc.

However, the parents had not taught them anything negative about relationship with a lover; no sir! So these same people would do a hula in the nude in a motel room with a lover and he be well shaven, sweet smelling and sensitive – and as a result would find themselves enjoying sex much more than they ever had at home in their marriage.

One piece of advice I heard about selecting a partner stuck in my mind: ‘If you are a man, talk to the father of your girlfriend and find out how her mother treated him. If you are a woman, talk to the mother of your boyfriend and see how his father treated her.’

One chemist I interviewed had a beautiful 28-year-old wife who told me that he only made love to her about once a month because he was always ‘too tired’ from running his shop. However, I discovered that with his lover, 10 years older than his wife, he was doing it up to 4 times a week.

Also, when I found out through sexual education that the main female sex problem in my generation had been failure to explore the possibilities of their own sexuality, another basic fact became apparent: for generations women have been ‘conned’ with lines like – ‘a nice woman doesn’t enjoy sex’. Although they hotly deny it, it seemed to me that some women in the immediate past generation were still influenced by this type of thinking – and thus they downgraded their own sexuality.

It was popular amongst many older women to talk negative. The modern young woman is changing this but is still confused because, as outlined ahead, the real change needed is still to come. It seemed the modern young women knew they must go somewhere different but, because of the example and attitudes passed to them, they were *confused* about where.

It started me questioning: did some of the people I grew up with refuse masturbation – which could help develop their sexual expression – and thus stunted their sexual growth? Were they likely to only be ‘turned on’ in certain circumstances – maybe where there was guilt, lots of drink, naughtiness or novelty – and consequently, were quite often more likely to be aroused by lovers than by their regular partner? Not much help for marriages, I felt.

I found that novelty and guilt were two big ‘turn on’ factors. However, novelty could wear off very quickly and you couldn’t go on feeling guilty forever. Was it that sometimes these ‘turn-ons’ vanished and left us without enough attraction to sustain a long-term relationship?

In the early days of writing my first book, I gained two new secretaries – one of whom was a gorgeous little blonde whom I immediately named ‘Little Snooks’, and another charming tall dark girl who was promptly named ‘Big Snooks’. Big Snooks had been married and divorced a couple of times, and was something of a psychologist in her own right. She and Little Snooks played a significant part in getting my book writing going again. Little Snooks and her husband were having one or two difficulties and she used to come in and say to me: ‘You must keep working at it Jim; people need this sort of book’.

THIS GIRL LOVED PENISES

That first P.W.P. night, when the President introduced me to the beautiful girl standing against the wall, I could not believe my good luck! She had beautiful blue eyes, dark hair and a flashing smile like my wife. I was really amazed when I rang her up to invite her out and she accepted.

We had some great times. At first she would talk about her husband who had left her and I would talk about my Beth – but gradually, as time went on, we developed a relationship which came to mean a lot to both of us. That was thirty-four years ago, and there is no doubt that, as far as my love for Beth would allow, I loved that girl – and still would if she were alive.

Beth by now had taken a job with a well-known Melbourne and Balaclava florist Alan Gollings – from whom I used to buy flowers for her when we were together. We now saw each other quite often, sometimes having dinner, or some such, with the family, but there was no sign of a reconciliation – and Beth had moved from her mother's house to a flat.

I noticed that some of the women I met didn't present Beth's problems; some had different problems and some had worse ones. I also realized that, like many other people, we unknowingly subscribed to the 'and they lived happily ever after' syndrome – and were disappointed when married life didn't turn out that way.

I found it's not so easy to live a single life: there are many moments of loneliness: despite the girls I was lucky enough to know, there were many nights of sleeping alone and I am one who really enjoys being close and companionable. It is interesting to look back on the fact that I never ceased to love my wife, nor did I have any intention of abandoning our marriage while there was a chance of reconciliation.

Our break-up was tough on our sons – although, looking back, I don't think it really did them any long-term harm. Tony, who earlier had been right up the top of his class and was a very good footballer and cricketer, left his school and went to another one, and then left that also. He took a job and I sat up with him late at night urging him to go back to school.

The next day he did go back, and the manager of the firm where he had worked later told me he had never seen anyone work so hard; he said that Tony did about three days work in one! He later went back, finished his schooling and went on to become a qualified psychologist.

Most people did not know about the separation, and, as I had quite a few square-dancing commitments for various charities, there were many raised eyebrows when I appeared with one or other of my girlfriends, instead of Beth.

I will never forget one of the girls I made love with. She was aged about 35 and was parted from her husband, a University lecturer who was apparently not at all interested in sex. Like so many other men, I had always believed I had a rather small penis. This girl loved penises. You only had to go near her with one, and she would start to sigh almost before you touched her. She enjoyed her sexual expression so easily and so much that I wished I could have taken a movie film to show other women, and perhaps help them to adjust their attitudes. She was slim, but quite strong, and on occasion she just about knocked me over in lovemaking, and said: 'excuse me, Jim, but I just lose control.' She would get down on her knees and look at my penis and say, 'You have a beautiful penis, Jim'. She did more for me than any psychiatrist could have done.

CHAPTER 8:

E A DC D E E

Then our grandchildren stepped into the picture. Our daughter and son-in-law, Rob, were living in Sydney and I received the great news by telegram that a beautiful baby boy had been born – and that he was perfect. I raced over to tell Beth at her flat but she already knew. We were all very happy at this moment. Within 24 hours the blow struck. Jason had cystic fibrosis – and he died in 13 weeks.

Beth flew straight to Sydney to be with them, and I followed later by car. Rob and I went off to arrange Jason's funeral. The Rev. Norman Pfeiffer who had been our Vicar in St. Leonard's Church in Brighton, had moved to Sydney and he very kindly agreed to conduct the service. I will never forget the Church and the lawn outside with flowers for this little boy whose personality had made such a deep impression on us all in just 13 weeks.

Beth and I were brought together in our grief over our grandson. It made other problems seem small. I had to go back to Melbourne and get back to work.

Beth and I were in Sydney, staying at our daughter and son-in-law's house – and, of course, sleeping in separate bedrooms. Then, because I had come up by road, and Beth by plane – I offered to drive her back to Melbourne. Perhaps I had planned it that way and, for all I know, she may have too?

We had much time for discussion on the 600-mile journey home. At about 1 o'clock in the morning we were getting very tired and I turned into a motel and leapt out of the car. There was a double bed and a single bed, so I quickly deposited all our cases on the single bed.

We were tired and I think Beth was beyond argument. We got into the double bed together and after some cuddling, which I think we both enjoyed, I managed to make love to her.

We talked a bit more on the way home – nothing more was said about our night. I managed to make some dates with her – taking her out to dinner and out to the pictures, and gradually our relationship started to warm up again. . I started to ask her out, and she accepted. Needless to say, I always had flowers, which I used to give her pretty constantly, anyway, when we were living together.

One night I took her out to the theatre and took her back to our home for supper. I had already bought a new, exciting nightie and put it under her pillow. She laughed heartily when she found it, and then stayed for the night. The next morning we were lying on the beach and Beth suddenly said: 'I think I'll come home on Monday'.

I was determined I was not going to make too much of it:
'Oh, that's good,' I said casually – and got up and went for a

swim. I didn't mention another word about it, and next day she was back home. Beth had been away a year and a week exactly.

We always liked cuddling one another and each of us appreciated a return to this – a great help in healing our relationship.

When I look back on it all, I feel – and I know some other members of the family agree with me – that Jason did not live in vain.

Up in Sydney, the Rev. Pfeiffer went to work on the adoption agencies because Sue and Rob had now found out that, once you've had a baby with cystic fibrosis, there is a 1 in 4 chance that you can have another one – and they were not prepared to take a further risk. After many months of waiting, they were told they could have a baby. Finally the big day arrived.

Sue and Rob went into the hospital, and waited around in the ward where there were about 20 babies in cots. Sue walked along the line of cots until she stopped at one with a beautiful golden haired baby boy in it.

She called Rob over to see this child and was 'ooing' and 'aahing' over it when the Sister in Charge came up and said: 'This is your baby!'

I was not there, but Sue – who had had a rough start in life herself with no less than 14 operations and the death of her baby to contend with – has a really beautiful smile, and I can picture just how radiant she looked.

With young adopted Justin in the picture, the two grandparents forgot their difficulties and resumed married life.

There were still some areas of dispute between Beth and me, but there was more reality in our relationship.

Sometimes we would sit up in the bath, one at each end, and float a glass of claret back and forth. As we got a little more

talkative we would relate the 'naughty' experiences that had happened to us during our separation! Much laughter. Then off to bed and some lovemaking – very happy and healing...

A few weeks later in mid-1971, I had a bushfire appeal square dance booked at Leggett's Ballroom – which earlier had been the scene of so many of our big square dance shows. During the square dancing boom, Beth had usually been down there on the floor, in her pretty flared skirt square dance frock, helping to get the sets together and helping people to learn the dancing, while I was up on the stage calling the dances.

Needless to say the many thousands of square dancers knew all about the fact that we had been separated and they were so delighted to see us back together again – with me in my usual position and Beth in hers.

Scores of them came up to the stage and shook my hand and so many of them hugged and kissed Beth.

Leggett's Ballroom, huge, magnificent floor, wide open dance space with warm curtains all around, was very run down compared to the way it had been when we had used it during the square dance boom of the 1950s. It was still huge and we had a huge crowd. We raised a lot of money for the bushfire appeal that night, but for me it was not bushfire night – it was Beth night – and I will never forget the warmth and happiness from all those dancers seeing us together again.

ENTER SASCHA

Our adopted grandson Justin grew into the most beautiful lad, with fair hair and a concerned look in his eye which reminded us all very much of Jason. The sun never shone out of any child's eyes more than it did out of Justin's – at least as far as we were concerned.

Then Sue and Rob set about adopting a sister for Justin. Again there was a long, long wait. During this period we all found ourselves saying: 'it will be hard for a girl being Justin's sister because he is so absolutely beautiful'. We just could not imagine any child not being overshadowed by Justin.

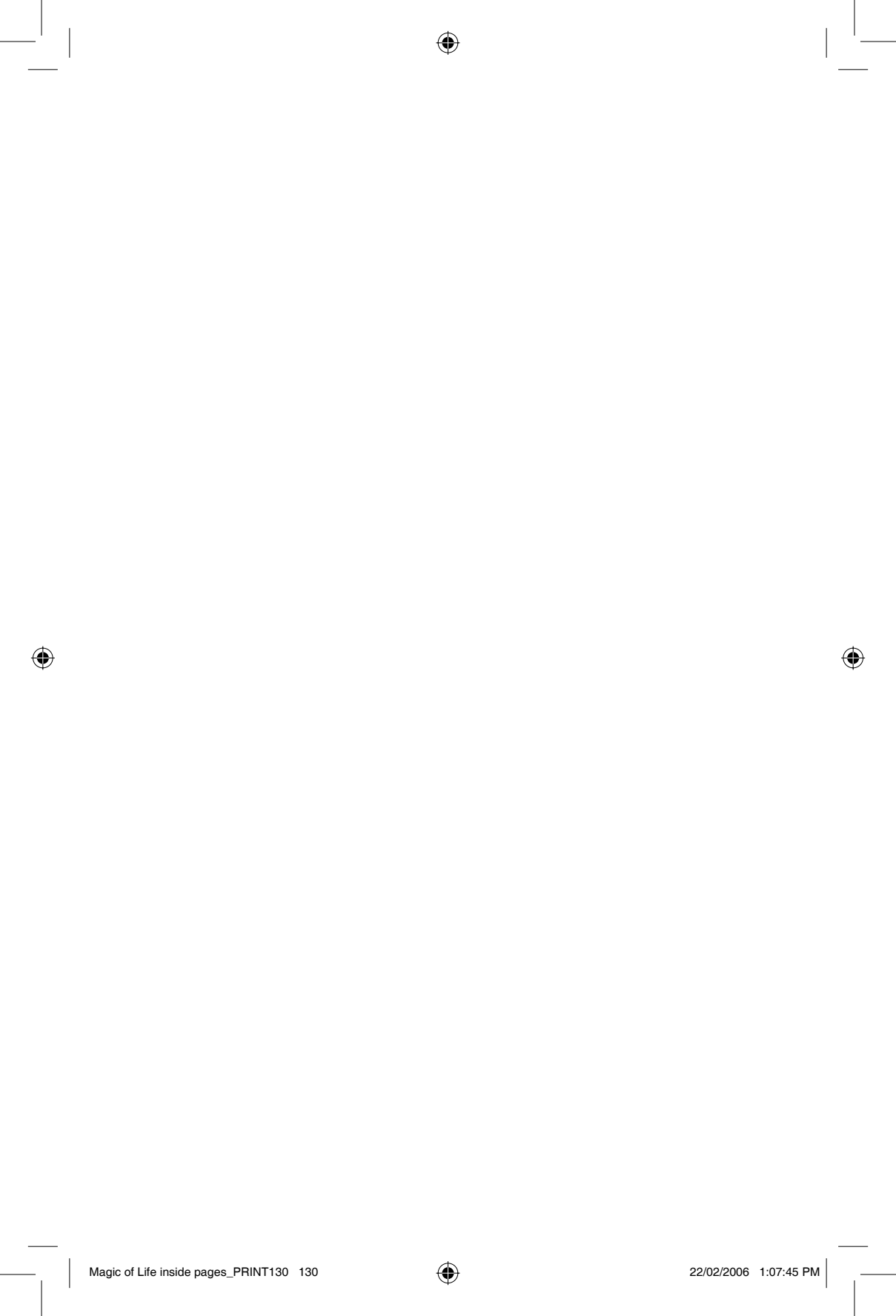
Eventually after this long wait the adoption authorities, spurred on by the Rev. Pfeiffer, gave them a little daughter.

To say that we were all wrong in our judgement would be a great understatement. Sascha turned out to be a female Justin – full of personality and just about as gorgeous a little girl as one could imagine.

The funny part about it all is that the adopted children belong to our family in every way. They look like our family – and no doubt the careful matching that the adoption people did was partly responsible for this.

However, Justin and Sascha have proved to be an attitude education in themselves: that an adopted child can be not one bit different from one who is not adopted.

This for me has been as much a revelation as was my experience in the iron lung. Now began the most intense learning period of my life...



CHAPTER 9:

E A A E F E

Dr. Francis Macnab, Chief Executive Officer of Melbourne's famous Cairnmillar Institute, became important at this stage, because he encouraged me in writing my first book. In 1974 I changed the title from 'Orgasms are Good for You' and the new title was: 'Are You (Really) Fun To Live With?' I was still being attacked by many people for daring to write a book about sex. After throwing away 900 pages, a year or so earlier, I found it hard to get re-started.

But my two valued secretaries, who at the time I called 'Big Snooks' and "Little Snooks", encouraged me, and Dr. Macnab said he thought I was on the right track and should keep going. He took me to lunch at the Athenaeum Club on a number of occasions, taking trouble to add his comments and edit my work. Then he delighted me by writing this introduction.

FOREWORD

In a functional disposable society, tenderness and mutual enjoyment sustained at a level of depth, become rare experiences. While we all have many contacts, acquaintances, friendships of sorts, most of us keep alive that quest for closeness in our relationships.

Many see closeness as being nothing more than the physical juggle of two bodies and the momentary spasm of sexual excitement. There is more to closeness than that. Much more. It is ever so easily we bungle it, get embarrassed, exasperated, frustrated, angry, or frightened. Although we would like to be close, we employ many subtle ways to avoid or evade closeness. We miss out on one of the peak experiences of life.

The sexual side of life carries many cultural sanctions and personal sensitivities. It is hard to imagine this not to be the case. But when sanctions stand in the way of knowledge and when sensitivities preclude enjoyment, then we are greatly impoverished. Jim Vickers-Willis wants people to be informed, and to enjoy life with each other.

Jim Vickers-Willis is one of the unusual people of the world. Crippled as a result of polio, he still teaches people to dance and sing. In his insurance work he is involved each day with people who talk about property and preparing for their future and even their death. He says he has found that many of them have never lived, are not really living, and are not in possession of the greatest property available to mankind — a satisfying enjoyable close relationship.

With an astonishing openness to human experience and with a genuine concern for people, Jim Vickers-Willis has written this book. I have talked a great deal with him about it, and we hope it will help many to think about themselves in a different way and find more enjoyment in each other's company.

Francis Macnab

*(Dr. Francis A. Macnab, M.A., Ph.D
(Aberdeen), M.A.Ps.S., M.A.C.E.
Consulting Psychologist and
Psychotherapist.
Director, The Cairnmillar Institute.
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Over seven years, on several occasions I announced at home that I had finished my book – and the family proceeded to open

a bottle of champagne to celebrate. Then about three months later they would find I was re-writing it again! They just did not believe me when it finally was completed. I checked the proofs in the early hours of the morning without my reading glasses, and consequently the first 8,000 copies that were sold had 16 errors!

We subsequently sent the Prime Minister (Mr Whitlam) a copy of 'Are You (Really) Fun To Live With' and he sent me back a complimentary and humorous letter.

Just at that moment to my front door came our neighbour from 4 doors away, Robert Ward, whom I had always known as a creative and enterprising film executive. He was Director of a film distribution company, and he said: 'I have heard about the book you are writing Jim, and we are trying to import a feature-length sex education film which you must see.'

That's how we were introduced to the great sex education film 'The Language of Love'. Robert Ward said they had been trying to bring this film into Australia but it had been 3 times banned by the then (Liberal) Australian Government. He said it was a true sex education film, and it would fit in with my book.

I telephoned Dr. Oldmeadow, the President of the Marriage Guidance Council, with whom I had had several interviews, and Dr. Francis Macnab, and told them I had set up a screening of the sex education film, especially for them, at a theatre in Malvern.

Just our little group sat in this big empty picture theatre watching 'The Language of Love'. I did not realize at that moment that I would subsequently watch that film more than 100 times, until I knew off by heart just about every word spoken in it.

As we came out after the screening, Dr. Oldmeadow said: 'That's a very valuable film; it must be shown in Australia. I want

all our Marriage Guidance couples to see it – and I particularly want all our Counsellors to see it.’ Francis also had some positive comments plus his own typical humorous comment that the Swedish women in it weren’t very responsive!

Then began the big fight – with all of us writing to Members of Parliament, the Prime Minister, speaking on the radio and writing letters to the press. At this point, the Australian Government had changed from Liberal to the Labor Party – with Gough Whitlam in charge. Amongst other things, the new Government changed the Tax laws making ten-year life insurance policies less valuable in future.

We had managed to get a good controversy going in newspapers regarding ‘The Language of Love’. Much of the comment was negative, and it was treated like a pornographic film.

The trouble was that many good people were unwilling to have their name mentioned in connection with it – even though they might see the virtue of more knowledge about this subject.

Prudish ideas held sway in the community, and people were frightened that they would look silly, and their own good name would be threatened. So, although I could detect that there was a groundswell of people who felt that this was a matter of importance, there were very few who were prepared to come forward and openly support genuine comprehensive sex education for all ages.

However, a champion was to emerge:

The Labor party decided to consider lifting the ban on ‘The Language of Love’. Prime Minister Gough Whitlam convened a special screening of the film for Members of Parliament. When it was held, Senator Gair, of Queensland, walked out in the middle of the show declaring: ‘People who watch that film have sewer minds.’

Opinion was evenly divided in the Government, but eventually the ban was lifted and the great sex education film was admitted to Australia on the casting vote of the then Attorney General – Senator Lionel Murphy.

He became our hero, our champion – and of course later became the famous and very controversial Mr. Justice Murphy of the High Court, where he fought for years as a dissenting voice when Court decisions virtually emasculated Section 260 – the Anti-Tax Avoidance Law – and billions of dollars of taxes were stolen from the Australian public by tax avoiders.

Robert Ward and his partner Mark Josem immediately set up a Theatre Managers and Press screening of ‘The Language of Love’, in a suburban Theatre: It was a scorching hot day, and I was asked to introduce the film from the stage for these theatre executives, the press and various other visitors. The theatre was quite full.

I spoke a fifteen-minute introduction, not realizing that this was to be the first of hundreds of such introductions in theatres all around Australia.

During the show, two of my best friends, in their late forties and themselves parents of teenagers, got up in the middle of the session and walked out of the theatre in disgust at the contents of this sex education film. I found that many so-called ‘religious’ people took this attitude, but these two were not particularly religious; they were just a nice sweet couple – and the fact that even good people like this took a negative attitude towards education in this vital area of life, spurred me on.

I had been told that one of the City theatres was considering putting on ‘The Language of Love’ as an experiment.

At the end of the show, I was called down to the Manager’s room – and it turned out that a group which controlled 60 theatres wanted ‘The Language of Love’.

There was just one stipulation: Jim Vickers-Willis had to do an introduction to each show.

Meanwhile the film producers decided we had to have television advertising – and Jim Vickers-Willis had to do it.

This was my dream come true! Magic! Another miracle!

One thing I was determined on: I was not going to let anybody pay me for doing the television ads. I felt there were so many people in the community who would gladly say ‘He is just doing it for money’. Writing was an important part of my business activities and I worked hard to try to make the book a financial success.

However, I said I would do the television advertisements for nothing, provided I was allowed to say what I wanted to say – and not have it edited.

This was agreed – and of course I was a ‘natural’. The reason was that I was just saying what came from my heart:

‘After 7 years of writing this book, interviewing so many people and hearing all their problems, just like a miracle along comes this wonderful sex education film – The Language of Love’.

They didn’t have to tell me to act it; I meant it to the depths of my soul!

They stood me up in front of the camera without any script and told me they wanted 55 seconds. Needless to say, I had rehearsed privately until I was just about blue in the face.

My obvious sincerity came across right away, and the crew making the advertisement were very pleased after ‘Take 1’, but it was found I had done 59 seconds. Do it again. The second one was a bit too short – and the third one just right!

That initial television advertisement. turned out to be a smashing success, and – together with the controversy that

quickly surrounded the film – brought in great numbers at the box office..

My book arrived from the printer, the television advertisements were on the air – and it was opening day at The Australia cinema in Collins Street, Melbourne!

Will I ever forget it? I had been involved in some exciting openings – the incredible launch of our square dancing at the Palais Royale in Adelaide when more than 1,000 people could not get into the ballroom; the second night at the huge Showgrounds Centennial Hall when promoter John Brennan came up to my microphone, interrupting the dance, and announced that the 4,000th. square dancer had just paid admission at the door!

But here was another dream come true.

You could not get along fashionable Collins Street footpath for people – young ones, old ones, couples and singles, and everyone looking excited. A hot, cloudless Melbourne day. I had come in suit and collar and tie, ready to appear under the spotlights. The film was starting in 10 minutes; the queue at the ticket box was long.

Even more delightful – people were standing around the lobby and sitting on chairs **READING MY BOOK!**

Years of frustration, uncertainty and downright anguish – of people around me saying ‘Pull your head in’, ‘Give it away old chap’, and much worse than that – dropped away.

I came out in a big grin – which was still there when the theatre filled up. I pushed through the jostling crowd at the door to walk down the aisle to the screen.

I spoke quite passionately for about 10 minutes, telling the audience how I had become involved, had been interviewing people over the past 7 years and had come to the conclusion

that millions were missing out; that their lives could be made much healthier and happier and better focussed with accurate sex education such as provided by 'The Language of Love'. I said I hoped that they enjoyed the film and would get something out of it.

The audience clapped as I walked back up the darkened aisle, and 'The Language of Love' – which some exploiting promoters overseas had used as a porno movie – at last was on the public screen, in its own right, as sex education.

There was great controversy in the media about the screening of this film – which many regarded as 'wicked'. There were quotes from Members of Parliament. One leading Member of Parliament described it as 'pornography' and I know for a fact he had never seen it. Church leaders – particularly from the big churches in the City, denounced the film, and one described how he had been in the cinema toilet and overheard 'young fellows talking about what they were going to do to girls, in very rough language.'

One Melbourne newspaper sent a team of its journalists down to comment on the film: It included a couple of older writers who had been my colleagues when I was a journalist in my young years. They delighted in taking the mickey out of me (making me look like an idiot), and, of course, were able to make great humour out of the fact that I considered present-day attitudes towards masturbation and homosexuals were ridiculous and also unfair and dangerous.

I remember seeing the photographs of each of these experienced writers in that newspaper, and thinking to myself: 'if they had done the job I have over the past 7 years, interviewing all these people, they would very likely feel quite differently about it, just as I do.'

The people packed in. Often there was not a seat for me and I watched the first few shows standing behind the back row. At the start of each show, I would go out front, and I quickly developed a 10-minute speech I repeated almost word for word at every performance.

It started off with 5 shows a day, then had to be extended to 6 to accommodate the crowds. This meant I had to be there all day – and of course I could not attend to my business. I was not getting paid for the film. After a week of this, it was decided to open *The Language of Love* in a second theatre next door – the Australia Two Cinema. This ran programs which started halfway through the Australia One program – and in this way they coped with the ever-increasing crowds attracted by the T/V advertising and the publicity.

So, at this stage, I had 11 programs a day – which went all day and most of the night. I became really smooth in my pre-film presentation – also very tired!

Obviously this could not go on forever and the numbers were growing. Also, it was decided the film had to be shown in other areas – because its fame was spreading around Australia. So it was decided I should make a film-clip – four minutes of introduction to clip on to the front of each film. This would mean that I would be able to introduce the film in all the theatres without actually being there. Whoopee!

So I flew up to Sydney – and then had one of the most interesting and pleasant experiences of my life at a film production unit called Atlab. It was attached to one of the television stations, and I arrived having rehearsed myself over and over again.

I knew I had to speak for about 4 minutes without a script and in one take. In those days we did not have video tape, and I

was also told that the 35 mm film was terribly costly and every take that was wasted cost us a lot of money.

By this time I had entered into a financial arrangement with the film distribution company – which meant that, as my book was being advertised with the film, I paid half of the cost of any of these productions.

I knew that the arrangement I had made was not a very good deal from my point of view – but for years I had been writing this book hoping it would see the light of day and do the good I thought it could do, and I was very anxious to seize this opportunity. I was not going to argue. I borrowed on our family home to keep going.

I remember the morning I arrived in the studio at Atlab. They stood me in front of blue velvet curtains and put up all their lights. Prior to the crew arriving, I had been standing in the corner reciting the 4-minutes of film introduction which I had memorized – based largely on what I had been saying in the theatres before each performance. Having been a square dance caller helped my memorising.

They turned the camera on and away I went. I did the 4 minutes without a stutter, and when it was finished the crew, who had never met me before, came up and patted me on the back and were most friendly.

They could see I was under a strain, and they told me how Sammy Davis, Jr. had once been in that studio and had done 30 minutes adlib in ‘one’. They said ‘He was a genius’, but they made me feel good, too, because I had done it in ‘Take 1’. Little did I know!

I went down to lunch, much relieved, with some of the camera crew.

Then the news came down that there had been something

wrong with our camera – and we had to shoot the whole introduction again!

Well, believe it or not, it then took 5 days before they finally got that four-minute introduction fixed: there were camera breakdowns, things that went wrong in editing, things that I did wrong, etc., etc.

Eventually, after many takes and re-takes, and me flying back to Melbourne and then back to Sydney, it was decided that the film clip would be better if it was shot in 3 segments – with 3 different camera angles. It all sounds so obvious today, but back in those days it had to be found out. So instead of having to speak for 4 minutes, I was only speaking for a minute or so at a time – which was much easier.

I well remember the last night, about 11 o'clock, when they brought down our latest production and screened it in their little theatre: It was so much better – and I knew we had done it!

Whenever I see the Atlab credits on television productions these days, I always have a warm feeling remembering the kindness and interest and help of so many of the Atlab people, who realized that I was just an amateur trying to do a job – which by the end of 5 days quite a few of them supported.

I flew back to Melbourne triumphantly with the film clip which was screened at the film distributors' theatre in Malvern – and everyone expressed satisfaction.

Immediately it was clipped on to the front of each version of 'The Language of Love' – and I was able to go back to attending to my business instead of just hanging around the Australia Hotel theatres all day drinking cups of coffee.

I did visit the theatres whenever possible because the books were selling and some people wanted autographs. Almost immediately, the film went up to Sydney. My great friend and

business mate Tom Potts and I flew up and stayed at the Promenade Hotel at Kings Cross, where the press and the television news programs interviewed me – and some of them also interviewed Beth.

One program asked her: ‘is Jim fun to live with?’ My poor wife gave a rather uncertain reply. I don’t think, particularly at that time, I was much fun to live with!

Many of the television interviewers were there to take the mickey out of us: Some of them obviously had been sent along by their stations to be sensational and controversial. Others, I felt, were personally negative to some of the information and suggestions I was trying to put across to the public – in particular regarding such things as masturbation, homosexuality and nudity.

I developed a line of answers and, after a while, I found that everybody was asking the same questions. The answer would be right there on my lips before they’d finished asking the question.

I gradually became more and more relaxed as I realized how limited was the approach of these media questioners – and also that, as I was dealing in basic truth, there was no way in which I could put a foot wrong. I gained more and more confidence.

The Melbourne Herald had a story about promiscuity and they asked for my comment about ‘sexual freedom’. I was delighted when they published my answer on the front page: ‘There is no sexual freedom in promiscuity; how many people are free enough to enjoy sex in their marriage bed? That’s what I’m interested in.’

I also saw the great power of television: I was totally unknown in Sydney, but would be walking down the City street with Tom Potts, and someone would smile at me and wave and

say 'You're the Language of Love man' Our advertisements had only been on the Sydney television for a couple of nights.

Then, a week later, I would be walking along Riverside Drive in Perth when someone would swerve their car into the kerb and say 'Hi' and recognize me from the T/V ad.

'The Language of Love' was now being screened in various States. Unfortunately, from the point of view of our book and what we got back from it financially, when the advertising hit in Sydney, almost every copy of the initial issue of the book had been sold out. I estimate there was probably an extra sale of 30,000 available in Sydney alone, but we could not get the books there in time to take advantage of the promotion caused by the advertising and by the television, radio and newspaper coverage.

We found some shopkeepers interested when they thought it was porno; once they found it was sex education – yuk!

With my partner, Tom Potts, I had the proprietor of a South Melbourne newsagency tell me in a self righteous voice that she 'didn't handle *that* sort of material' – rejecting my book. As we stood there, a young woman came in and asked to buy a book and, when the newsagent couldn't find it, she called out to her mother wheeling a pram in the street and the mother called back: 'It's the one where the fella is raping the sheila on the front'. The proprietor went straight over to the shelf and picked up the required book. As we went out, without achieving a sale, we reflected that the only four-letter word in our rejected book was 'love'.

It was not all work: One afternoon, Tom Potts and I had been calling on bookshops in Kings Cross and, as we had a couple of hours to waste before catching our 'plane back to Melbourne, we decided we'd have a look at one of the Kings Cross porno

movie shows. We admitted to each other that neither of us had ever been to such a show. So we dived down this dark staircase and arrived in a dungeon-like cellar, and shuffled our way through the darkness to a couple of back seats.

On a small screen there was a flickering film – with couples just holding hands and walking around looking affectionate. I thought to myself ‘This is pretty tame’.

However, gradually the show hotted up, and soon there were two girls making love with one muscular man, and it gradually got more and more pornographic.

Eventually it reached a stage where a nude girl was sitting beside a fellow with his erect penis right in front of her mouth.

At this point Tom Potts in a loud stage whisper said: ‘oh, by the way Jim, that reminds me – we haven’t eaten yet!’

This comment caused a great laugh through the tiny underground theatrette. It was typical Tom Potts.

As ‘The Language of Love’ was now set for Perth and Adelaide, I flew across there – this time with Dr. Francis Macnab. I found the media were more interested in interviewing Francis than me – and I became a sort of second string. I listened to Francis Macnab as he put over some fabulous lines in answer to media questions:

- ‘If sex was always successful, it would not be nearly so interesting.’
- ‘You can’t replace a relationship with a pill.’
- ***‘It’s one thing giving children information; it’s quite another to pass on an attitude.’***

Francis had the media hanging on to his every word – and I admired his ability.

It took me back to one of my original heroes – Dr. Murray Banks, American psychologist/psychiatrist who awakened so

many of us in the 1960s. He was far ahead of his time, and he managed to get vital information over, in particular regarding sexuality and relationships – information which was almost entirely taboo at the time.

He would talk about such unmentionable things as orgasms and then, when everybody was getting very uptight, he would turn it into a great joke and the tension would be relieved with laughter. I regarded him as a genius and wished I had his ability. I have heard he has died recently in the U.S.A. – a great man.

Francis was serene, and always made his questioners look as though they knew a lot less than he did.

In Perth, we went into the Channel 9 studios – and I will never forget the rumpus which was caused.

They were making the advertisements and trailers for the presentation of ‘The Language of Love’ – and the great sex education film was being shown on a multiplicity of screens throughout the main studio at Channel 9, in Perth.

You could not get along the passages for the people packed there watching this amazing film – which included people actually making love – through the glass walls of the studio. The staff just knocked off to view it. It made me realize the power of what we were handling – when the sort of sophisticated staff of a television station could be so amazed and enthralled by this screening.

Although they now had the film clip I had made to preface ‘The Language of Love’, I was invited along to the Perth theatre to personally speak to the audience before the first show. To do this I had to climb up a wooden stairway at the back of the stage and with my polio-affected leg I wondered if I would ever manage to get down again. However, I did and at interval there was a long line of people waiting for me to autograph books.

On the way back from Perth, I was asked to appear in a television debate, on live television, with a well-known Adelaide psychologist who was also a Roman Catholic.

He spoke first and voiced strong opposition to 'The Language of Love' being opened in Adelaide. He also said that sex should only be engaged in for the procreation of children; otherwise it was a sin.

When my turn came, I explained to the television audience that 'The Language of Love' had been set up by the Swedish Schools Sex Education Unit – a team of doctors and psychologists and teachers – for showing to 12-year-olds in company with their teachers and parents.

As I spoke freely about its contents, the psychologist kept on interrupting me and denying what I was saying and it finished up in a real dogfight on live television.

Afterwards, the 'phones ran hot, and I was pleased to find that 90% of the calls were in favour of us.

Back to Melbourne – where the two theatres were still packing them in – and on to Sydney...

At the Boulevard Hotel, Sydney – at the end of a day of many radio and television interviews – a newspaper reporter came up to me and said: 'They are banning your film and book in Queensland'.

I was delighted. This could mean good publicity and so I immediately booked a flight to Queensland.

I telephoned the various television stations, radio stations and the press – and within an hour my hotel suite at Lennon's was filled with lights and cameras and microphones.

One crew from the ABC just sat there and asked me questions for half an hour with their camera running. The answers I gave were not only included in the news services,

but for about 3 years afterwards whenever there was a program about sex, there would be a segment included which was taken out of that particular filming.

This was at the height of the Bjelke Petersen reign, when marchers, protestors, etc., quite often finished up in jail. I looked into the cameras on the news services and said deliberately: 'A good leader is a man who makes decisions and is right sometimes. On this occasion Mr. Bjelke Petersen is totally wrong.'

I remember climbing aboard the 'plane for Melbourne afterwards and feeling quite relieved that I had got out of Queensland without being arrested!

Meanwhile, the Directors of the film company had made some secret arrangements.

They announced to the Press that they were bringing 'The Language of Love' to Queensland on a certain date about 2 weeks ahead.

Full page advertisements were placed in the newspaper, the film was flown up to Queensland and played to packed houses.

Once it had been seen by a large number of local people, it was pretty hard for the Government or anyone else to make out that this straight, rather boring sex education film – which had been made by Sweden's School Sex Education Dept. for showing to 12-year-olds – was in fact just cheap and nasty pornography. Various psychologists and doctors and other professionals who were in the audience on the opening night wrote to the press supporting the film. So the ban was beaten – and we also sold a lot of copies of 'Are you (really) fun to live with?'

'The Language of Love' went on playing in various theatres around Australia for two years. I think at the time it was an all-time record run for a film that had not been made by a major movie company. The media controversy gradually died away.

The 'Language of Love' had at this time been screened in New Zealand, but with nearly all the actual sex demonstration parts cut out. Some alleged authority over there had stated in the press that if they showed the film in full 'there would be mass rape in the streets of New Zealand'.

Well, it was now shown in full in Australia, and I personally met a very large number of people who appreciated it and said they had benefited greatly from the film.

One simple but very important part of the film showed different types and shapes of penises and vaginas – actual close-up pictures. This upset some people.

However, I encountered many cases where people became terribly worried, sometimes over a period of many years, because they thought they were 'different' – their penis or their vagina had something wrong, or was too small or was misshapen.

Typical was a 19-year-old male student at the Queensland University, where his French Lecturer told me he had been baffled because this intelligent boy failed all his subjects in one year and told the lecturer he wanted to 'drop-out'. The lecturer who told me the story said that he was surprised when the young man was re-admitted to the University for another year. When the 19-year-old visited the lecturer in the first term of the new year, he mentioned that he had been in bed with a girl a few nights previously, but had not made love to her. The lecturer asked 'Why?' – and out came the whole story:

The boy said he was 'different' to other people; he had not been circumcised. He had been hiding himself from people for 7 years. During a recent camp he had not taken a shower for 16 days because he did not want people to see that he was 'different'. He had reasoned that if he were a drop-out from university he

could take up some inconspicuous job where he would not be noticed as much as if he were a university graduate.

The Professor pointed out to the student that these days fewer and fewer boys were being circumcised (the last I heard it was down to about 25% in Australia) – so the chances were that there were likely to be more uncircumcised boys than circumcised ones. The student was quite amazed. The Professor said that the boy's behaviour changed after that and his study improved. This simple piece of information had made a great difference for the young man.

As the weeks and months went by, the film attracted customers in great numbers. The book sold well – but we were never in a position to produce sufficient copies quickly enough to cover marketing opportunities as the film moved from city to city. Tom Potts – who is also a very good drummer and member of my square dance band – and I were excited and delighted with the amount of information we were getting out to the public, but our businesses were being neglected and a vast amount of time was going into effort for which we were not being paid.

Philosophical Tom Potts – a beautiful wife and a great marriage relationship – said: 'Val and I have learnt so much and gained so much by being involved in this book promotion. Just that one line of yours at the end of one of the chapters was worth it.'

What was the line?

'If you want to be married and you want your family relationships to work out happily and healthily, it all starts from one thing: Be sure you make your marriage partner the most important person in the world.'

In 1976, the sex education feature film was followed by

another film 'It Could Happen To You' – which was a film about venereal disease. It was an excellent film, quite humorous in a couple of places, but deadly accurate, containing vital information about VD. It pointed out how much VD there was in the community and how many young people in particular contracted it and sometimes failed to get early treatment. As a result, not only was their health affected at the time, but the problem carried on into the future preventing women from having babies and also causing danger to the babies. It gave a clear picture how things had changed from the days of Henry the Eighth to now when adequate treatment could deal with the problem – provided it was obtained quickly enough.

It pointed out that if (without condoms) you had several sex partners, it was not a question of what were your chances of contracting VD, but what were your chances of not getting it.

Pretty slim.

I was delighted to give my support as I had done with *The Language of Love*, and I made the television ads for 'It Could Happen To You'.

It was unlucky that in Melbourne the film was screened at its opening in the drive-in cinemas, and on the opening night a terrific storm broke with pelting rain and hail.

The media did not pick it up and object to it and so it did not get involved in the same sort of controversy and publicity that surrounded *The Language of Love*. Also, the subject of VD was an extremely unpopular subject – and people were just not interested in talking about it. They took the attitude that it could not happen to them.

'It Could Happen To You' ran briefly and then was taken off as a box office failure. I still think of it as one of the best social

education films I have seen; the fact that it was seen by so few further underlined the attitudes prevailing at that time.

Now our book was out on the market and selling at the theatres. I used the book as a means of propaganda – sending it to members of Parliament, newspaper and magazine editors, etc. Very few replied to me, and the book received just a little publicity.

Typical was the case of one newspaper which rang me and said that a top Army man had stated that all people who sold drugs should be hanged. They asked me what did I think about this?

I answered: 'Well, where are you going to draw the line as to who are drug pushers? What about people who sell cigarettes and alcohol? Cigarettes are actually the most deadly drug in our community.'

Yes, the newspaper actually printed the statement that 'Jim Vickers-Willis says all people who sell cigarettes should be hanged.' Blimey!

Then one day the telephone rang and it was a call from the Editor of the magazine section of the Sydney Daily Telegraph. He said, 'I've read your book, and I think it's very good. I think it deserves to be widely publicised. How much of it will you permit us to print?'

I said, 'I'm not really in this to make money; you can print the whole lot if you like – free.'

So he told me they were going to run a big feature on my book and they did. A double-page feature with full-page advertisements leading up to it, and front-page pointers, too!

Well, I felt we were made! Immediately they published this, I photo-stated their articles and shot them off to other newspapers in Australia – saying that I was happy to do the same for them.

My phone started ringing and all of a sudden everyone wanted us! We achieved wonderful publicity all round the country and whenever I was dragged in to talk on the radio or television, I made sure I also spoke about the 'Language of Love', and the film boomed. Unfortunately we just couldn't get enough books to the right places at the right time. We saw this over and over again.

Then came the sequel film, 'More about the Language of Love' – and this was produced by joining up two sex information films that (so far as I can gather) had been largely screened overseas as pornography. We cut some bits out of each film and I wrote five scripts explaining what was going on, so that people would understand the significance from the point of view of sexual education.

These scripts were flown across to Sweden and were spoken on to the film by Dr. Maj Briht Bergstrom-Walen, who for more than 20 years had been head of the Swedish School Sex Education Program.

When Dr.Maj Briht's serious, clinical face came onto the screen reading my scripts in all sorts of important parts of the film 'More about the Language of Love', it was very hard for even the most diehard prude to classify this as pornography.

Maj Briht subsequently visited Australia, and her comment, in 1975, about homosexuality remains in my mind. She said: 'I never talk about homosexuals or heterosexuals; we are all sexual beings.'

A very intelligent and well educated woman – she had overriding control when the "Language of Love" was made, with full authority to delete anything that was not valuable sex education. That is why the original Language of Love, boring as it may have been in parts, was totally valuable sex education

T h e M a g i c o f L i f e

material, presented tastefully and with brilliant filming. We all learnt much from Maj Briht.

Another remarkable lady, Dame Elisabeth Murdoch, mother of Rupert and widow of Sir Keith Murdoch (my former much respected newspaper boss) later had a lesson for me as I was feeling very old, having just turned 70. When I congratulated her on her active life – chairman of this, president of that, etc – at her age 83, she replied “oh yes Jim; but I wouldn’t mind being seventy again”. She made me feel so young!



CHAPTER 10:

E A E DA CE '

I realised that there were many worthy citizens insisting that we cling to unnatural prudish guilty attitudes, which I had now found, through my many hundreds of interviews, were causing great harm in our community. No doubt had they had the advantage of this knowledge they would have changed their attitudes as I did. Gradually all the bits and pieces were coming together and I began to realise I was on to something important.. .

I felt the real point was being missed:

Very often what was being put forward, particularly to our young ones, as 'pure' and sometimes 'godly', could – if one used the words popular with the prudish ones – perhaps be more truly described as 'dangerous filth'.

From what I was hearing, this misinformation was damaging to young minds, causing destructive attitudes.

In several radio and television interviews I endeavoured to speak about this subject, but often found that the presenter running the program was embarrassed and changed the subject.

One well-known ABC commentator gave me a free run in a one-hour program and he said he expected some people were likely to ring him up and make vicious comments at him for airing these matters. I actually said to him 'if you allow people to speak honestly, as you have done with me, you are likely to get into trouble.' About a month after that program, he was sacked! I still have a recording of the program.

Whenever any psychologist or counsellor dared to say something designed to explode these old-fashioned myths, speakers from 'religious' organizations like 'The Festival of Light' would howl them down.

So I decided to set up an organization on the other side called 'The Quality of Life Association' (QLA). We held a meeting and I was elected President, and a woman lawyer, Lesley Vick, was appointed Secretary.

RESTRICTIONS AGAINST COMING OUT WITH THE TRUTH

I remember after I had spoken at the opening meeting, a child psychiatrist said to me: 'You're doing a great job, Jim, and I agree with what you are saying – but I have a government job and I could never say it publicly'. That was more than 30 years ago so hopefully we have relaxed a little since this T & G newspaper advertisement was printed:

A MESSAGE FROM THE MAN WITH 1000 FRIENDS



JIM VICKERS-WILLIS

Victorian Manager of the T & G (Mr. Keith Crozier):

"Not only has Jim Vickers-Willis achieved a worthwhile career for himself as an assurance adviser, and a steady income for his family over the past 15 years, but the T & G has received a large number of letters of thanks for his knowledge, integrity and efficient servicing from his 1000-odd life assurance clients; in fact he appears to have made 1000 friends.

"He is now prepared to spend some of his time teaching his unique and valuable methods and systems to newcomers under our big new Employment/Training Campaign — and to assist in our sales training system which is now one of the 'finest' in this country. This provides a golden opportunity right now for many executive-type men — aged about 23 to 45 — and will help the T & G in its long-term endeavours to maintain and further develop the most respected team of assurance advisers available to the Australian public."

This advertisement brought good success, with many recruits joining the staff over a period of weeks. However, subsequently, the T&G Life Insurance company cancelled this successful recruiting advertising campaign based on me and

my thousand clients 'the man with a thousand friends' after Head Office heard I was involved in promoting sex education.

On another occasion I sat around a big table while insurance executives from a number of companies discussed using some well known personality as a figurehead. Various t/v and radio people were mentioned. Then someone got up and said Jim Vickers-Willis had a reputation for integrity in the industry and was well known.

Someone else got up and said Jim was involved in sex education and supported legal nude bathing beaches. That was the end of the suggestion!

I saw this as another part of our psychological circumcision – the acceptance of restrictions against 'coming out' with the truth

Initially the whole and sole object of the QLA then was – 'to help promote more open and constructive attitudes towards sexuality and adult relationships and family life in our community'.

One would have thought everyone would have been in favour of this objective – but we received horrible letters, people ringing us up with abuse and often quite obscene comments. One constant caller would ring us up at all hours of the night – particularly around 3 a.m.! One woman wrote: 'I would like to rub Jim Vickers-Willis' nose in the hot tar on Dendy Street', and her letter was published in our local newspaper.

A Square Dance President made some comments to the press about my interest in sex education and one interstate newspaper produced a headline: 'President upset about the not-so-square dancer'. Needless to say, when I arrived in that City to do a charity square dance for which I was booked, there was a barrage of T.V. cameras waiting – and our dance received some really good publicity.

In QLA we put our finger on a number of controversial

matters, including the then hidden devastation of cigarette smoking, and made suggestions – our letters going to 21 Australian papers and 10 newspapers in Canada.

I found statistics showing that if a person did not smoke by age 18, there was a very low chance they would be hooked. So I carried out one suggestion with our 10 grand-children – put some money into an investment fund: if they did not smoke by age 18, they got their share of the fund; if they smoked, the others got their share. Our family are very competitive! So far no smokers.

I toured Australia with my wife Beth, promoting the Language of Love and our book. I was particularly pleased about this, because Beth had an opportunity to hear some of the information I was receiving about the difficulties of people of all ages – particularly young people.

She was quite amazed to hear the ignorance that was fed back to us from people we interviewed. I don't think anyone could ever be the same once having had this sort of insight. I also gained great television experience.

When I stepped off the plane in Perth on my first visit, I was full of friendship and good humour. The first television interviewer said to me: 'Don't you think people will consider you a charlatan?'

Oh, boy! My guard went up in a flash.

One interviewer on A Current Affair gave me a torrid time, but when I turned all her questions around and conveyed the message that I wanted, they didn't put it on the air!

Another television crew set up in my room and filmed me for half an hour, just pausing to change reels. I answered their questions one after another without stopping, and by the time I

had finished, the room was so hot with their lighting that it was almost impossible to breathe.

When I toured the West with Dr. Macnab I developed a healthy respect for his ability to get the best out of a rather hostile media. When I say 'hostile', I must say that, now that the ball was rolling, they gave us a go. But always there was the editing of what we said. If it could possibly be turned into something titillating or sensational, it would be featured. Often television broadcasts would be edited in such a way as to make what we said sound foolish, and sometimes the exact opposite of what we were trying to say.

The attitude of a number of television interviewers was obviously produced by their own prejudices, and sometimes I felt by an underlying idea that they would get kudos if they 'showed us up'.

One major Sunday newspaper managed to pull out a really sensational line – at least it was sensational taken out of context – and as a result featured my book on their poster!

I went out just as often as I could – talking to all sorts of people and answering their questions – groups such as Lions Clubs, Rotary Clubs, Women's organizations, Marriage Counsellors, Social Workers, Emergency Telephone answerers, Prisoners in gaol, Jaycees, Parents Without Partners, School classes, etc.

One Easter Sunday afternoon I was addressing about 250 nudists at River Valley Nudist Holiday Resort, in Echuca, Victoria. I was particularly interested because I find that, in certain respects, they tend to be rather more thinking people than average. However, down in the front there were a number of their children who asked questions like: 'What is masturbation?' 'What is homosexuality? What is V.D.?' These children were

aged about 12 to 14 – and it was very revealing that their parents had failed to tell them these basic facts.

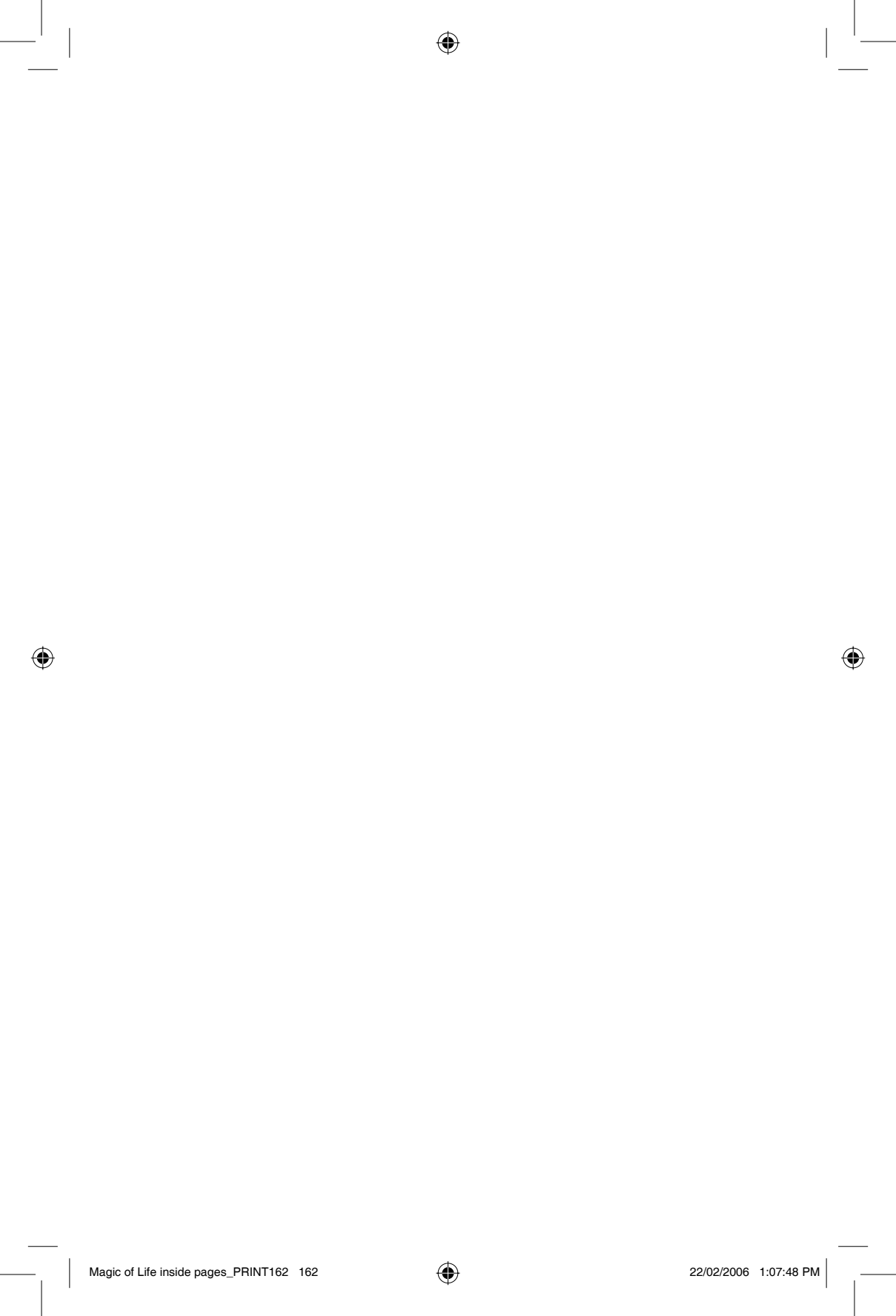
That weekend I called a square dance for the nudists – out on the lawn on a sunny afternoon. It was one of the most beautiful sights I have ever seen – all these scores of naked brown bodies dancing on the green grass with the gumtrees and blue sky behind.

I was asked to talk about sex at an annual convention of the Junior Chamber of Commerce at Camperdown, Victoria. About 500 or 600 Jaycees were there, and I was told that my opponent on the stage was to be a doctor. I was supposed to speak for about 20 minutes, but, being me, I spoke for an hour. Then somebody gave me a nudge and said the doctor was waiting to speak.

On came psychologist Dr. Bob Montgomery – whom I knew faintly. He was only able to speak for about 10 minutes because I had filched all his time, but he was very nice about it.

As I had been doing nearly all the talking, most of the questions were addressed to me, and I answered them in my usual fashion – relating to actual problems which hundreds of people had brought to me over the past 10 years or so. Then up would get my ‘opponent’ Dr. Bob Montgomery and confirm everything I had said – with figures from his research and from his University studies.

We found we agreed on absolutely everything – although we had both learned from entirely different sources. That’s how I came to get together with him – and to make sexual information cassettes with this distinguished young psychologist who has so much talent that I just hope we do not lose him from Australia.



CHAPTER 11:

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A community organisation made ‘sex education’ the theme of its annual convention, and Beth and I were invited to a Convention holiday centre to spend the weekend with the 700-plus members – giving a talk, opening a big discussion and screening ‘The Language of Love’ sex education film.

In one part of the movie, the young male actor gets on top of his girl, puts his penis inside her, enjoys himself for a few moments, then rolls over and goes to sleep. The girl’s comment in the morning ‘It wasn’t much fun for me’.

Sound familiar?

In the Language of Love film, the young man then wakes up to himself: next time he does much preliminary love-making to turn his girl on, taking time to stimulate her including tenderly licking (the tongue being the most gentle means) and kissing

her vagina. He makes love to her, she enjoys it – and they live happily ever after.

Unknown to me, the censor of this particular issue of the film apparently did not approve of the love-making, kissing and licking the vagina and he cut it out!

So when I publicly presented that film in front of the 700 people, the young man hopped on the girl and then hopped off her – and she was in tears. Then he hopped on her again and hopped straight off – and she was smiling with happiness.

I then discovered that this home entertainment version of ‘The Language of Love’ – the version which would undoubtedly be seen by vast numbers of young people – had had this vital piece of sexual education material censored out.

Blimey!

So, should we be taking a hard look at our censorship? At present it freely allows cigarette smoking on our T/V screens by stars – some of whom have now admitted they were heavily bribed by the tobacco industry to smoke on camera and thus influence their young fans to take up smoking – but does not allow natural happy sexual love-making by married couples to be shown. Only ‘simulated’ sex can be shown, whatever that is supposed to mean – but it invariably means cheapskate and often unnatural.

Is our censorship based on the concept that sex must not be shown as good, happy fun, enjoyable, worthwhile; that showing it this way is presumed to offend? Is this playing a big part in the difficulties of young couples to enjoy and benefit from this important part of their life together – ***blocking their development of attitudes which can help sustain worthwhile long-term relationships?***

This means that lots of ‘nasties’, such as rape and so-called

‘soft porn’ situations are permitted to be shown, but a man and a woman making love tenderly and lovingly, with the best possible technique and care – which is the sort of example that millions of young people growing up need to see over and over again to help them in their coming marriage relationships – is demeaned by mis-use of the word ‘explicit’, and censored out. Under censorship today, the sex education film ‘The Language of Love’ is still not allowed to be seen by anyone under the age of 18. Isn’t it often too late by then?

When I was invited to speak at a Government inquiry on censorship of videos and films, I submitted in advance a written synopsis – and when it came to my turn to speak they conveniently ran out of time! I objected and the Press came out of their slumbers.

All I wanted to say was – ‘Is our censorship doing more harm than good? Is it blocking accurate, helpful information? Is it that – if children were properly educated about sexuality – they would be much better equipped to deal with, and reject, such misleading things as cheapskate pornography on the internet?’

I noticed that people who were a failure in their own sexual life tended to excuse themselves by denigrating sex. Others took a ‘dog-in-the-manger attitude’ – if I can’t enjoy it, why should anyone else? They made great censors – and perhaps some of the more strident Right to Life campaigners. Would the availability of such aids as the RU486 pill remove abortion as a political football and change our political landscape? I wondered.

I also noted a number of instances where parents of late teenagers found excuses to put obstacles in the way of the young ones’ sexual activities. An 18-year-old girl said to me: ‘I don’t think mum and dad ever got much out of it and I think

they might be slightly jealous of us enjoying it so much. They seem to be a bit embarrassed.'

When I mentioned this I found parents in the audience responding with such things as: 'Oh, so you just let the kids do whatever they like; they don't need to abide by any rules.'

That was not how I saw it at all: It seemed to me that sometimes a great opportunity was missed – the chance for the young ones to enjoy and learn without distractions of mortgage, babies etc.

If an eighteen, nineteen or twenty year-old had a sexual relationship with one other person; if they were faithful to one another and they used contraceptives, condoms, etc., I was saying this should be encouraged, and the more the merrier, helping each of them to develop their sexuality and to learn about it and about themselves, and how to handle a relationship – which experience may be of great help to them in their adult life ahead. When parents put in blockers to their legitimate sexual activities, the kids often stopped listening – and then they *were* out of control.

Next came my most effective – and last – appearance on one main metropolitan T/V station.

'I MASTURBATE – DO YOU?'

I was invited into a Melbourne television channel on a live to air program in which I had appeared a few times before. Usually they wanted to question me about sexuality, square dancing or nudity. On this occasion, the male compere towards the end of the program asked me: 'What about your own sex life, Jim?'

I seized my chance; I had been waiting for someone to ask me that on live television. That week someone on radio had spoken of 'masturbation and associated evils' I looked straight

into the television camera at all the people at home and said: 'Well, I masturbate – do you?' I still have a video of it, recorded more than 15 years ago.

The male compere nearly fell off his stool with shock, and the female compere giggled. They were so embarrassed that they quickly changed the subject to square dancing.

This was a pity: I quickly said 'That's probably the first time this has been said on television anywhere in the world – which shows our ridiculous attitudes towards a normal natural thing like masturbation'.

What I wanted to say, and what they didn't give me a chance to say, was that the previous week I had watched actor Richard Burton, on international television, describe how he had been drunk for 24 hours ('stoned' he called it), and the audience laughed uproariously. I thought – what a terrible example to put on television, especially in front of millions of young people. But if that actor had said he had enjoyed some sex with a girl, or had masturbated, they would be likely to censor him off the T/V. I was never invited back on that program.

It made me wonder that people who were not upset by cigarette smoking could be so upset by masturbation – one being so harmful to everyone and the other harmful to no-one. I wondered where this all came from – and was told that some primitive tribes frowned heavily on masturbation, regarding it as a waste of good sperm which could have been used to increase the numbers of their tribe – so that they would outnumber rival tribes – for tribe security? Some religions also – the priesthood making out masturbation was a sin against God – keeping up the number of their followers – maintaining their job security?

In more recent times, we find Dr. Jocelyn Elders, the United States Surgeon General, {America's top health executive}, suggesting

that masturbation should be a subject discussed in the school curriculum – and we find the United States President sacking her immediately. Dr. Elders, a leading paediatrician, had been an outstanding leader in thinking in the health field for many years.

Have perverted, unnatural, guilty ideas about sex – indoctrinated by a multitude of revivalists, evangelists and other big money-making pushers – created a strong tide in USA and elsewhere against such a positive and healthy suggestion?

Psychologists I interviewed insisted rape by men was not about sex but about violence and power over women. I also regularly heard of women using their sexuality for power over men: ‘if you are a good boy and do what I want, you will get it tonight’.

I started to ask: ‘are we using sex for power purposes because we’ve been taught guilt and negative attitudes discouraging us from using it for interest, variety, fun, excitement, joy, love – the magic of life?’

The problem, as I came to realise, was that often many fine, successful and intelligent people were ignorant and sometimes very screwed up regarding sexuality. Getting out of their ‘iron lung’ would require a big effort and they had to **want** to change. The more respected they were, the more difficult it was for their children to recognise the need for a re-think about the sexual attitudes and examples being passed on to them – **faulty standards by which the young ones were now living.**

THE VICAR’S DAUGHTER CAMEO NO.1 (CONTINUED)...

The two sets of parents arranged a quick wedding so that the bulge would not be too noticeable at the marriage service. Bill had to give up his new girlfriend. Invitations were produced hastily, plus a wedding dress. The couple went on a honeymoon, then settled down to married life.

My next interview was five years later when the young couple had two children. Bill told me his sex life was 'practically non-existent'. He loved their children but otherwise was not very happy.

Another five years and he came to see me in trouble

His marriage was very unhappy. He had been drinking. After a night out, he had crashed his car injuring someone, while over the limit. He had to appear in court and believed he would go to jail. He told me he did not intend to get a lawyer to defend him.

When I asked 'why not' he replied 'it's all my own fault; I deserve whatever I get; I should not have got her pregnant in the first place. It's all gone wrong and I'm to blame.'

I said I was constantly hearing cases like this – young people getting into trouble because of ignorance caused by otherwise good parents who failed to provide the necessary information and clear guidance in this important part of life. In fact even today in the 21st century, when young ones know so much more, I am still finding parents reluctant to take the necessary action and take their daughter to the doctor for a contraceptive prescription plus information about how to use it correctly; the same with condoms

I suggested to Bill that as his parents and his wife's parents had neglected their duties in failing to pass on the necessary information, they must take some of the blame. I did not add what I thought – that they had put the matter of their own embarrassment and preserving their good name ahead of consideration for the future happiness of the young ones. I said: 'You've made a couple of silly mistakes; lots of young people do that; I've made a few myself. It's ridiculous to take all the blame.'

He agreed he should defend himself but said he had no money for a lawyer. I found \$2000 in some life insurance given to him by his grandfather and he defended himself. He did not go to jail.

Subsequently, Prudence and Bill went in for some counselling and resumed 'normal married life'. How did they get on? As with so many cases of people who came to see me, I've been left to wonder. . .

***THERE'S MAGIC THERE FOR EVERYONE. –
IF THEY WILL TAKE IT***

Dealing with women who had never achieved an orgasm and did not masturbate, one doctor was shrewd enough to tell them it was because their clitoris was too small – and he gave them a cream to rub on their clitoris to 'make it larger'. The women patients rubbed their clitoris with this ordinary lubricating cream and soon they started to achieve orgasm!

Another woman reported having been born with an unusually large clitoris and it had been operated on to make her more 'normal' in appearance. She missed out on sexual pleasure throughout her life as a result of her parents and doctor doing this operation for 'cosmetic' purposes. How many cases did I encounter where it was considered that circumcising boys made them 'look nicer'. I said to myself 'how can people have the gall to do this to innocent little children?' The answer, of course, as usual, is that it is the custom – and that they do not know any better.

An example of a more positive attitude was a gentleman of 60 who said: 'I would not swap anything for cuddling up to my wife in bed'.

Earlier in life he said he used to sleep in pyjamas, and his

wife in a long nightie. When out visiting one night, a young husband said to him: 'You don't wear pyjamas to bed, do you?' The young man said that his mother-in-law had given his wife about 3 nighties: They were all hanging up in the cupboard, and had never been used.

After this laughing discussion, the older man went home and tried sleeping in the nude: His effort lasted for 3 nights. The draughts seemed to come down under the sheets and he developed a pain in his back. So he gave up, with much mirth from his wife. Later, they spent holidays at a nudist camp and became used to no clothes in bed. They found they liked it.

His wife said: 'He is like a big warm teddy bear; we were crazy to wear clothes in bed for all those years; I sleep like a top and wake revitalized; it's great: much more relaxing, more comfortable' – and in fact they both said that this has become one of the greatest joys of their life.

ENRICH YOUR LIFE AND YOUR RELATIONSHIPS

I don't want this book to be like many I have read over the past 25 years. It has seemed to me that the ones which were most popular, achieved the best write-ups in the press, were those that 'soft-soaped' the reader with popular platitudes; that were easy to read because they *massaged* the problems rather than bringing him or her face to face with the real (quite often unpalatable and more subtle) problem to be tackled.

So, to get the most out of this book, would you consider giving some thought to *yourself* as you grew up to see if you could detect in what way you might have been 'psychologically circumcised' (ie influenced into developing certain unhelpful attitudes) in subtle ways undetectable unless you really give thought to it?

1. Did your elders and teachers impress on you that your sexuality is a beautiful and valuable part of your personality, to be treated with respect and given plenty of thought – so that you could learn to use it constructively throughout your life to enrich your life and enrich your adult relationships? Did they?
2. What sort of recollections do you have regarding parents and other respected elders passing on attitudes of shame regarding your human body and nudity; were you made to feel comfortable about touching your sexual parts – and not guilty about masturbation?
3. Did you grow up with the impression that it was desirable to have a big penis or large breasts?
4. Did your mother and father convey to you the idea that sex over the long term could be enjoyable and important, and had provided some lasting magic for them in their married life? Did they?

There are many more similar questions which you could ask yourself if you wish to help yourself to get a little more out of your own sexuality for the remainder of your life.

That's what this book is about – hoping to bring to your attention these quite often subtle destructive attitudes which we sometimes accept without question, so that you can make up your own mind.

Take the attitude of the 50-year-old man with a wife and 4 children who said to me: 'The most exciting thing is when you get into bed with a new woman'. What chance did his attitude give to his long-term relationship?

My response, which went over like a lead balloon, was 'Wouldn't there be even more reason to be excited if you could make it in bed with your wife?'

T h e M a g i c o f L i f e

Then there was the housewife in her 40's who said to me:
'With your husband you don't have to try very hard; he's always
there. With a lover it's now or never – you've got to put your
best foot forward'



CHAPTER 12 :

A E AD E

And what about the present-day officially organised and sanctioned perversion of young people before they are released into the community from our jails?

When I was a young man I was driving my truck, towing a caravan full of ice cream and soft drinks, through a shopping centre. I had a ridiculous bolt connection to the caravan and the bolt came out when I went over a bump at 45 km/h. The caravan tore across the road, sparks coming up from its towbar. When it hit the gutter, bottles of soft drinks crashed through the walls onto the pavement. Luckily for me it was a Sunday night and no-one was around. Otherwise I could have killed someone – and probably gone to jail for manslaughter.

I wasn't an irresponsible man; I hadn't been drinking; I was a young journalist – running a catering business on the side to

build up my future, and doing a part-time University course. But I was stupid, ignorant – and lucky.

Had I ended in jail, as happens to so many young men, I probably would have been grabbed by the heavies and raped.

What sort of effect do you think this would have had on my entire life?

I ask this question because that is what is happening in the jails right now. It is accepted; it is part of the tradition – the custom. Taxpayers pay about \$60,000 per year to have each prisoner looked after in jail. They are put in there to uphold the law – but the law actually causes to take place a crime which very often is much worse (and from the point of view of the welfare of our community much more damaging) than the crime that got them in there. Doesn't that strike you as quite perverted?

Visits to jails were a regular occurrence during the interviews whilst writing this book. Some talks were given in jails and questions and interviews with sex criminals in particular provided some very interesting and revealing information. Sex criminals were usually uptight about nudity: 'that's not for me' would be the comment.

Some jails had facilities which allowed a prisoner's wife to come in and visit with him privately with the idea that they could have a sexual relationship, but this was not generously allowed.

In one jail visited, the governor's wife, who was said to not enjoy her sexual life in her marriage, was also said to have influenced her husband to allow this intimate facility to be used as little as possible.

Let's blow this thing wide open. Isn't it time – really, really time – that we had a long hard and honest look at the effects of what harm is being done to our community by what they are doing to

human sexuality – particularly to the young -- in our jails? Have we been allowing perverted uptight people to run the show?

'EASIER TO ACCEPT MY CELL'

On one of my sexual research trips in 1975 I was walking past the condemned cells of Pentridge Jail (Melbourne), accompanied by George McNaughton from the Prisoners' Aid Society, when a man in his thirties came out of the cells and said: 'Jim Vickers-Willis; hello!'

George said: 'This is Peter Lawless'. I looked a bit mystified, because I was probably one of the few people in the community who had not read in the paper, in the last week or so, that Peter John Lawless was in jail for life for a murder which he said he did not commit. Anyway, I realized who he was, and had a long interview with him regarding life in jail – and particularly the sexual side.

When interviewing prisoners, I have found that many protest their innocence. But in the case of Lawless he was so frank with me about his life of crime since the age of 17, that I must admit I left with the horrible feeling that there may have been a mistake in this case – and I believe that to this day.

As I walked out under the Pentridge gallows, I was trying to think of what I could say that might help him, and I found myself saying: 'Not far from here, in Fairfield Hospital, there are fellows in the iron lung – friends of mine – who would think they were in heaven, Peter, if they could be here, like us, walking beneath the gallows'. He wrote to me afterwards and said: 'What you said makes it easier for me to accept my cell'.

Subsequently, when a man on the phone said he was going

to commit suicide, his girl had left him and gone to Queensland with another man, I told him about Peter Lawless... I added: 'He is in a cell about 9' 6" long by 8' 6" wide and he is locked up there for 15 hours a day. Don't you think he would adore to swap with you – to be free and 32; do you think he'd be considering killing himself just because some girl had left him?'

I added: 'I reckon if you commit suicide, you're a bloody prawn'. It was rough advice, but I saw him subsequently and he was still alive! I wrote to Peter Lawless and told him of the good he had done someone on the outside.

Lawless was a thinker and a leader who organised the prison football. I was booked to give a talk about sexual attitudes in the theatrette at Bendigo Gaol. At the appointed time, only a couple of prisoners turned up and sat in the back row. Lawless saw what was happening, came in and sat right down the front. Miraculously, they all started to follow him in until the theatrette was filled! Years later Lawless was released – I hope to a happier life.

'A MISERABLE PERVERTED WORM'

I came to understand how deeply entrenched some are in defending their accepted and fixed ideas (no matter how stupid and unreal), their 'beliefs' (no matter how unbelievable), their 'morality' (no matter how immoral).

During my talks, I found that many people just did not want to hear anything that contradicted what they had learnt from their parents, their religion or their peer group. Many did not want the controversial subject mentioned. Some were quite violent in their response and there were some occasions when I was shouted at.

One lady on our telephone answering service called me 'A miserable perverted worm'. I still have it on cassette!

The association of sex and guilt – and its effect on long term marriages – was something I found repeated many times:

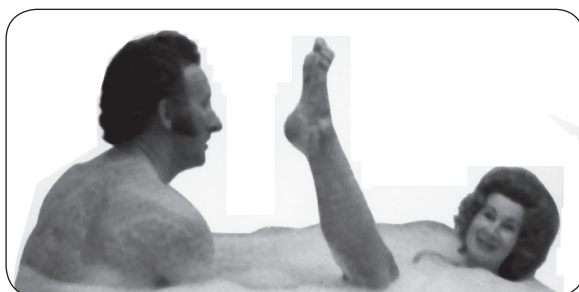
Couples in these outside-marriage affairs sometimes soared to great sexual delights they had never experienced before, sufficient to blow their lives apart. Their bewildered abandoned spouses would say 'I tried to turn him (her) on for years without getting much interest and now they go off and enjoy themselves with wild abandon, which I would have loved'.

A recent television program said that sexual abuse was 'multi-generational' which was 'unexplainable'. As I have seen it, most sexual attitudes are learned in families, so it is, in my opinion, clearly explainable.

Popular platitudes (which have an air of truth about them) I often found became the excuse for a person or couple to not look at what they might have done to prevent their problem and what they could do in the future to rectify it.

Some regular marriage 'Sexcuse' lines I heard – 'He (or she) is the wrong chemistry for me', 'oh, you just grow apart; you can't expect to go on loving someone forever'. The trouble is that so often these sort of lines were used by couples who were going well at the start, but then later considered they were the 'wrong chemistry' etc, *when they simply failed to work at personal differences in their relationship.*

How often I heard men and women particularly in their 40's and 50's saying things like: 'there just aren't any suitable men (or women) around'.



UNREAL EXPECTATIONS

Unlike the couple pictured above having fun in the bath on the night of their 21st wedding anniversary, some people who came down to see me were really anti-sex. One woman told me she had thrown out a partner 'who always wanted sex' but she had recently been lucky enough to meet another man who 'agreed to separate bedrooms and all that sort of thing'. She described him as 'a lovely man'.

Another woman told me that she wanted a man who was 'loving and kind, faithful and caring' but she was not interested in sex. I replied that most men in her age group, who were interested in a close long-term relationship with a woman, were interested in a sexual relationship – and the sort of man she was looking for could be very rare, if not non-existent.

A woman who was complaining 'there are no men available' said to Beth 'it's alright for you. You're lucky; you've got Jim'. I thought: if I were free and available, with my breathing and physical disabilities I wonder if she would have me?

CHAPTER 13:

D E CA

The 'fallout' from the book/film publicity went on and on. It was a cascade which changed our life...

My telephone started to ring from people all around the country – people who had seen the film or read the book or both, and wanted help; hundreds of distress calls – many followed by interviews – wife-swappers, homosexuals, people contemplating suicide, a huge number of men suffering impotence, deserted husbands and wives, parents worried about their children, a few 'flashers', many women who had never experienced orgasm.

As these people came to see me, I always switched on a small tape recorder at the start of the interview so that I had a recording of everything that was said. This was where I started to gain the insight which motivated this third book: I played

these tapes back and made notes on my dictaphone. Here was a goldfield of information – hundreds of case histories.

Many were remarkably alike. A great number expressed frustration at their lack of success in their relationships and in the same interview revealed that their attitudes and their beliefs were such as to make almost impossible any successful happy long-term relationship.

Here is some of what they told me... I wonder if you will relate to some of their experiences, as I did?

First the homosexuals of whom there were many – mostly men.

Although I explained I was not a counsellor, I listened to their situation and was then able to pass on to them the information I had gained from other people in similar circumstances. In some cases this information appeared to have quite a dramatic effect. This was in the 1970's and 80's.

Over and over again, on my telephone, young men would open up by saying 'I have never spoken about this to anyone else'. They would then tell me that they were attracted to other young men and quite frequently say that they had considered committing suicide, etc. My response would be to tell them that I had heard the same story from scores of other young men; that, far from feeling they were evil and unworthy, they should be considering whether those in our society who discriminated against them were in the wrong.

Sometimes, after only about 10 minutes conversation, a young man would say something like: 'You've no idea how relieved I feel, Mr. Vickers-Willis; I feel much better about myself'.

Today homosexuality is much more out in the open, thank goodness, but, in the 1970s/1980s public attitudes were causing

many young people to have nervous breakdowns, commit suicide, etc. Fortunately attitudes were changing – but slowly in those days.

It was mostly males. Homosexual females did not seem to be suffering the same problems, although ‘coming out’ and finding the same-sex partner they really needed, required courage and created family estrangements.

As a young man I had always proclaimed that homosexuals ‘gave me the shudders.’ Now – as one after another caused me to get to know more and more about the subject – I found myself proclaiming that public attitudes were ‘barbarous’ and some religious leaders in particular should be ashamed of themselves for causing so much intolerance and unnecessary misery. Their claim that the Bible condemned gay sex to me was not very convincing as the Bible even more strongly condemned lending money for interest (usury), greed and harm to children. Why weren’t spiritual leaders uniting to condemn these ancient sins which are so rampant in the modern world, instead of trying to return gay people to the closet?

A MEETING WHICH WAS A TURNING POINT

About 1980/81, I was invited to address one of the first meetings of the Victorian Aids Council, and was interested when I realized that I appeared to be the only person present who was not homosexual. It was back in the days when we knew so little about how Aids was transmitted that when they asked me if I would like some supper, I refused. I was even a bit cautious about shaking hands with the delegates!

I learnt more from them that night than they learnt from me, but one thing I said seemed to make an impression:

‘Your problem is that you won’t come out of the closet.’

I pointed out to them that my survey had shown me there were many thousands of homosexual men and women in the community. I said: 'If you came out in the open, formed your own political party, I believe you could have more members than the Liberal party and Labor party combined. You could form a huge lobby which would represent so many votes that it could not be ignored'. That was not long before they started the Gay Mardi Gras parades in Sydney.

One leader of the homosexual community had been a Government official for 30 years. I pointed out the Venereal disease problem, quite apart from aids, and asked him didn't he feel it was a problem that homosexuals were so promiscuous – some having great numbers of partners?

He agreed that this was one of the reasons why Aids had spread in the homosexual community, but added that his feeling was that heterosexuals mostly were more repressed and did not get as much satisfaction out of this part of their lives; he would rather be homosexual than heterosexual.

It was a point of view I had never considered, and it led on to discussion with him and various others, which raised a very important point:

How many married mothers and fathers – who do not enjoy their sexual relationship with their marriage partner – are actually homosexually inclined?

CHAPTER 14:

A D E FA E C E

HOMOSEXUALITY (AND OUR FAMILY LIFE):

If you really want to look at what harm has been done by the ridiculous psychologically circumcising attitudes towards homosexuality over the past 100 years, just look at our family life and the disasters caused:

I know when I was a public figure in the square dancing boom it was widely broadcast that I was a homosexual. Probably the rumour was started by my opposition in the big business/big money entertainment world. The reason: to be a homosexual in those days (1952/'53/'54) was regarded as the lowest of the low.

In these circumstances, people who were homosexually inclined did not admit it – *even to themselves*. They went

on like anybody else, got married and became mothers and fathers. The wives found they liked their girlfriends better than their husbands, and the husbands were always down at the pub enjoying their 'mates' while the 'little wife' was home minding the kids. Sound familiar?

How many of them went on trying to live a normally accepted relationship with their marriage partner without getting any pleasure out of their sexual relationship (because it was the wrong type of sex for them)? Even more important to the present generation is – how many children of these people grew up and had passed on to them negative attitudes towards sexuality – and how many of these children who are just heterosexuals themselves have gone out into the world (and got married) thoroughly confused by these negative attitudes passed on to them by their parents who never 'came out'?

I talked to the resident psychiatrist at a hospital specialising in mental treatment – where my square dance pianist Bob Patey and my wife and I used to teach square dances once a week. I would teach these patients some simple dance like 'Sue City Sue'. Then after lunch they would all go and have shock treatment and would forget everything I had taught them. Next week I would have to teach it to them all over again!

While we were having a cup of tea with the psychiatrist, after one dance session, I said to him: 'Why do you think these young people finish up in this situation?' He replied: 'Nature gives them inclinations and needs and feelings to make life interesting. Then you find misguided parents, religions, peer groups, etc. telling them that those feelings and inclinations are bad or even sinful and that they shouldn't want what they naturally want. This can be very confusing, particularly to some

young persons. Sometimes they commit suicide; sometimes they finish up here – confused about their own sexuality’.

HOMOSEXUALITY:

It has come a long way in our community since I started my sexual research interviews in 1966. About half way between then and now, a psychologist commented humorously: ‘Homosexuality – they used to hang you for it and then later they used to flog you and still later it was a jail term. Now it’s just a fine. I’m going to leave the country before they make it compulsory.’

One man who came to see me was an habitual ‘flasher’ – and wanted to be cured. He came from a Catholic family where masturbation was regarded as a ‘mortal sin,’ and told me how his brother-in-law would shout up the drive at him: ‘Get out you flasher!’

He said he had a compulsion to expose himself, and had done it for many years. On one occasion he had flashed at a married woman in her kitchen next door. She drew up a chair and watched with interest as he danced around. He said he did this on a number of occasions with this woman. He said he had no further contact with her, and added by way of explanation ‘she was a married woman’.

Over a period of 12 months, this man appeared regularly at my house – telling me how he was trying to break himself of this flashing habit. I suggested that he might consider joining a nudist club – but to the best of my knowledge he never did this. My wife Beth became rather concerned. He was a rather hang-dog-looking sort of man, and she felt suspicious about him – but I got to know him pretty well and understood his problem. After about a year, and about a dozen visits, he never came again.

What are people looking for when they flash? Mostly it seems they are seeking attention. A woman psychologist told me that she was sitting in the train and a fellow unzipped his pants and flashed at her. He obviously was expecting her to scream or some such. Instead the woman psychologist looked him in the eye and said: 'I'm a psychologist and I have seen lots of those before. You might as well put it away'. The man went red, hastily zipped up his pants, went and sat down the other end of the compartment, and got out at the next station.

CHAPTER 15:

EAC

Are some people more easily turned on when sex is naughty/exciting/guilty?
REAL LIFE CAMEO NO 2 continued. . .

Pam, who danced a hula in the nude for her lover, subsequently confessed about it to her husband, Bob; also David's wife, Alice, was informed when David returned to her. The two couples remained close friends.

Bob suffered intermittent impotence problems for a couple of years after this episode but said he felt his wife had 'freed herself sexually to some extent' and she subsequently appeared to enjoy their relationship more. . Bob told me he could not understand his wife's attitude but that didn't matter. They 'loved cuddling up in bed' and in later life still had 'quite an active sex life'. Much later I found he was taking half a Viagra pill on some occasions before making love (Pam said a whole Viagra made

him 'too strong'). With their children all married, the couple settled happily into their older life together. Bob said 'we seem to have found the real magic for us – *the magic of being content with one another*'.

It seemed as I interviewed people that some were subconsciously subscribing to the idea that sex was more interesting and more exciting when it was guilty or naughty. With masturbation defined as 'a mortal sin', how many young people had engaged in it with strong feelings of guilt? Some expressed guilt and aversion to touching their genitals.

Could it be that at a very early impressionable age the beautiful feelings of sexual expression could be locked in there with feelings of guilt?

In the 1970s after I gave a talk at Marriage Guidance Headquarters in Hutt St., Adelaide, the Counsellor in charge said: 'Did you notice a couple of our counsellors wriggling uncomfortably when you spoke so frankly about masturbation? That's one of our difficulties: Even some counsellors have not come to terms with their own sexuality'. When a Melbourne metropolitan daily newspaper wrote a one-page article about me, the reporter said: 'we are not allowed to print the word masturbation in our paper'. That was about 1980.

I was also a Freedom from Hunger area organiser for the local church, and one year a 19-year-old youth leader in one of the associated churches refused to allow his team of young people to help me with my collections 'because I had written a book about sex – and was an evil man'.

We owe a great debt to our ancestors and to religion, but...

A New Zealand priest, Father Felix Donnelly, who became well-known because of his outspoken comments about some

aspects of church teaching, said to me: 'our church is obsessed with sex'. I tape recorded his interview.

He explained how members of his congregation would come to Confession and spend the first part of the Confession telling him about all sorts of minor, trivial misdemeanours. He said: 'I think they hoped that that would send me off to sleep. Then they would get into the real stuff: I masturbated twice last week; I had evil thoughts about the wife next door', etc.

'That's what they really wanted to confess', Father Donnelly said.

The psychological 'iron lung' – RE-THINK NEEDED

It seemed to me that negatives and restrictions being advocated by some well meaning religious people, were not just wrong; they were quite evil – because they were having evil results for millions of young people. I felt clerical misinformation about sex could cause men and women to adopt attitudes which created problems and breakdown in their close relationships.

Some of my good religious friends are likely at first to snort at my findings, but, as with my old journalist colleagues knocking the Language of Love, I believe they would feel differently if they had had the real life experience I have had interviewing all these people over the past 30 years. It can't be God's word if it isn't true.

Which led me to endorphins and Dr. Marta Frid. She was one of those inquiring into the recently discovered phenomenon of endorphins, and their effect on the human body.



CHAPTER 16:

E D **FE** **, EC A**
A D **A E**

In U.S.A. and the United Kingdom, as I said earlier, I had become interested in the ideas of Dr. Wilhelm Reich, who in the 1950's was suggesting that satisfactory sexual expression could be important to the health of human beings.

Over and over again during these interviews I had husbands and wives tell me that after some enjoyable sex with their partner they had this beautiful feeling of tranquillity through their body and found their brain working more sharply. One husband said: 'My brain starts humming; sometimes I get my best ideas for business'. His wife added: 'Yes, I tell him to put his brain to sleep'.

It made me think of the champion boxer who stated that he always had sex before a fight. This contrasted with the 1930's

when the Australian Cricket Control Board for overseas Test Match tours would not allow wives to be in the same country as their husbands during the Test Series Matches. Did they think that if the husband was having sex with his wife he would not be able to hold a good steady straight bat?

The discovery of endorphins seemed possibly to relate to Dr. Reich's theories.

Endorphins were discovered because of research into the reason why morphine had its effect on the human body. It was found that there were morphine receptors in the human brain. The researchers realized that the receptors must be there for a purpose, and therefore the human body under certain circumstances must manufacture chemicals akin to morphine. They discovered these chemicals within the body and called them endorphins – which is a combination of the word “endogenous” (within the human body) and morphine.

The researchers found that the release of endorphins within the body brought feelings of tranquillity and also resistance to pain. They concluded that the body released these chemicals under certain circumstances – including extreme stress and ecstasy.

Immediately I heard that last word I became interested: Could it be possible that when we had an orgasm the human body released endorphins which were a benefit to the system?

So, hearing that Dr. Marta Frid was one of the leaders in endorphin enquiries, I asked her that question.

I will never forget her answer: ‘there is a heavy concentration of endorphin receptors *in the pleasure section of the brain.*’

WIFE SWAPPING AND A GOLF HAZARD...

Then came the wife-swappers. A husband in his thirties had this beautiful little brunette wife (who told me this story), but

he wanted more, and each weekend would study advertisements in the paper and tell his wife of opportunities for wife swapping. She said 'no'.

However, he had made a habit of going off every Sunday with his mates playing golf – leaving her in their suburban flat looking after the 2 children. She got so fed up with this, that one day when he quoted a wife-swapping advertisement, she said 'Okay'.

The next Saturday they went down to visit this couple in their flat, and they all sat around and talked and drank all night – but nothing else eventuated.

The next time it was decided to get together at their own house and the same thing happened: Lots of talking and drinking, and no other action.

During the next week, the other husband rang up and said: 'We are making another appointment with you next Saturday, but if nothing happens this time, it's all off'. So the following Saturday night they visited the wife-swapping couple. The golfing husband of the nice little brunette disappeared into the main bedroom with wife number 2, and husband number 2 went into the second double bedroom with the pretty brunette wife, who told me:

The couple in the main bedroom apparently didn't get on so well and by midnight they had come out and were making cups of coffee in the kitchen.

Husband No 2, who had had a fair bit of experience with other women in his wife swapping adventures, had a small bottle of champagne and 2 glasses ready for the pretty brunette in the second bedroom. They sat on the edge of the bed drinking and chatting. He let his hand wander across onto her leg. She put her hand on his so as to stop him going further.

They finished their drink and then he quickly undressed and started to help her take off her clothes. This done, he laid her on the bed and, rather to her surprise, started to massage her feet and kiss them and then moved gently and slowly up her leg kissing her all the way until he reached her vagina.

She was pushing him away, but, when he persisted firmly but gently, she relaxed back.

Soon he was kissing her vagina, massaging around her clitoris with sensitive fingers. She began to sigh with pleasure.

Nothing like this had ever happened with her husband: he always laid her on her back, went straight inside and gave her what he called 'a good naughty'. She rarely enjoyed it and he sometimes called her 'frigid'.

Now she was writhing on the bed in the hands of this stranger – suddenly feeling an awakening of violent passions she did not know she possessed. She wanted this man and put her arms out to pull him to her.

Husband no. 2, an experienced lover, held back. He was feeling rising passion for this beautiful little brunette, had a big strong erection, but he held back to arouse her further.

Soon she was crying and sighing and screaming for more and her arms pulled him to her. He held back and held back then plunged his penis in – his grunts of satisfaction being matched by her cries of joy as they exploded together in the mutual ecstasy of sexual expression. She had never experienced anything like this with her husband.

Afterwards, they lay back tenderly loving and appreciating each other – both looking forward to the next episode, which occurred about half an hour later.

As a result, the little brunette and Husband No. 2 did not

come out until 3 am – which did not appear to please the other couple.

The problem for the wife-swapping golfing husband was that from then on he was reluctant to go out golfing on Sundays with his mates leaving his wife alone in their flat – because he feared that husband number 2 would come around and visit her! This couple separated some years later.

Many people were approached to take part in wife swapping – including Beth and I. After we had been dancing to a great band in a hotel one Friday night, with a couple who were about 20 years younger than us, the husband leaned across the table to me and said: ‘What about a swap – Beryl for Beth? How about it, Jim?’ I said ‘No’.

The trouble was people thought that, because I was involved in writing books about sex education, we would be the sort of couple who would be ‘swingers’ and out there enjoying multiple partners. Who would want to swap Beth? Not me.

An American came in and told me he had attended an orgy at the Toorak (Melbourne) home of a Melbourne professional man.

The professional man told the American that he and his wife had started this behaviour after their 17-year-old daughter went off to Queensland with a young man. They condemned her, but later visited her in Queensland and decided that she and her boyfriend were having much more fun than they (the father and mother) had ever had in their own marriage. They considered that, thus far, their sexual life in particular had been very boring.

So they found another couple and then another, in Toorak (one of the wealthiest suburbs of Melbourne) and started wife-swapping. Later they arranged orgies, and the American was invited to one of these. He was told that it

would not just be 'oldies' (the host and his wife were in their fifties), but there would be plenty of spare young women in his own age group.

This was pre-Aids and I found that most people such as this man I interviewed were not conscious of the prevalence of venereal disease.

Soon after the arrival of Aids, I found myself in hot conflict with such people as the Bellarine Shire Council, and eventually asked them 'Are some of you more concerned about young people engaging in and enjoying sex than you are concerned about them dying of Aids?' Eventually they allowed condoms in their premises – but only after much argument.

In the case of the American in Toorak, his only comment was: 'Oh, we all know each other pretty well'.

At a dinner attended by about a hundred people, when I was the guest speaker everyone seemed to know everything about everything so I asked them: 'Hands up all the women here who masturbate'. That woke them up and a little titter went around the hall. Everyone looked at everyone else and no-one put their hand up.

I said: 'It would be just the same if I bought a television camera in here and asked how many people picked their nose. When we were young we were all made to feel that this was disgusting, so I probably would get the same result. However, the facts are that in private or in the shower or some such everyone picks their nose at some time.'

I asked the same question at a lunchtime meeting of about 90 psychologists and social workers at a Melbourne technical college. Up went the hands – about three-quarters of the audience indicated that they masturbated. Of course they did: They were psychologists and they knew that if they said they

masturbated there was less likely to be something wrong with them than if they did not!

Down the front there was a lady of about 55 who put her hand up and I walked off the stage and gave her a hug for being game enough to put her hand up. There was a laugh.

Later I was saying that our sexuality could be a great aid in attracting a partner and it was a shame that many older people discarded and denied their sexuality and lived lonely lives.

The 55-year-old woman in the front row put her hand up and said: 'Mr. Vickers-Willis, Mr. Vickers-Willis'.

I said: 'Yes'.

She said: 'My mother is age 75 and she masturbates.' There was a laugh from all the psychologists and social workers.

The woman went on: 'My father died a year ago and within 3 months mother had a boyfriend and they are going to be married'.

There it was in front of all those psychologists – the exact example of what I was talking about.

If you are an older person reading this, have you discarded your sexuality? Do you say proudly: 'oh I never have anything to do with that sort of nonsense'. How did you come to feel there was some virtue in that attitude? Although sex is not for everyone, for some at least it can mean the difference between loneliness and happiness.

It seemed often it was more popular to be negative or at least to talk negative; older people were worried what others would think about them if they were positive. A 90-year old man, whose wife had died, gave me this poem which was published in the local newsletter:

Old and Stupid

*Maybe I'm too old and bloody stupid
To be looking for a mate.
The ones I had I miss so much. And I wonder
Did they think togetherness was great*

*Maybe I am old and stupid
Still I wonder if out there
There is someone old and stupid
Wondering should they dare.*

*Maybe we are old and stupid
But the thought still lingers on
That is the heartbreak worth it
When our partner is gone?*

I saw that published in the Newsletter and said to myself “If only more older people would take that line and do that sort of thing, it would make it easier for oldies to gain the enjoyment of a new partner.”

Some weeks later he sent me an additional paragraph to his poem:

*I may be old but not so stupid
I found a young one, 80-odd
We are off to England
Single cabin — silly old sod.*

I felt, no matter what the result, how wonderful it is when people dare to escape from their “iron lung” — dare to live.

'IT'S A WONDER IT'S NOT MORE POPULAR'...

A mother came in and reported that her 7-year-old daughter had been 'interfered with' by the school caretaker. He had stood her up on a table, taken off her panties and tickled her vagina.

The caretaker had been duly sacked. Fortunately he had not done anything else to the little girl.

However, the mother came to see me because she was worried about her little girl: her problem was that when she asked the little girl how did she feel about it, the 7-year-old daughter replied that she had enjoyed it.

The mother felt she should have been upset from it and was worried that her daughter might be 'perverted' in some way, because she enjoyed it.

In questioning, I found that this mother had very negative ideas about masturbation. It seemed she would have felt things were more normal had it all been more of a psychological trauma for her daughter – which probably would then have been quoted as a reason later in life for sexual failings of her daughter.

More and more people kept ringing and coming to see me. I think the fact that I was not a counsellor and was not in any way judgemental, caused many of these people to open up and tell me their true – and often quite remarkable – stories:

One of the great things about fiction is that you get the whole story. It seems to me that so often in autobiographies you know that some of the most important and intimate facts and details are left out for many good reasons. In fiction they can tell it all – and so it comes up even more true to life than the real thing.

It was incredible when I realised people mostly were telling me the real truth. So many of the things they told me were

negative to them, even sometimes criminal. Some I detected were eager to speak about these matters, and how they felt about them, to someone. Once they got talking, it just poured out.

A public servant came in, looking just like any normal member of the Public Service – quietly dressed in a suit and with careful manners. After much hesitation, he told me his problem was that he could only get turned on sexually when another man urinated standing naked in front of him, singing.

When he found I did not blink, he went on to say the problem was finding partners who would do this with him.

I asked about his upbringing and found out that he had been close to his father who used to sing a lot around the house, would walk around in the nude and pat his son in a friendly fashion on the bottom, and then sometimes urinate.

The public servant did not suggest that there had been anything sexual about his father's behaviour, and in fact he said that his mother and father never gave him any information at all about sex, nor did they ever discuss the subject in his presence. But it appeared to me that as a small boy he was picking up something from his father's behaviour and turning it into sexual feelings – and now here he was in adult life finding out that this was the one way he could be turned on sexually.

This was an extraordinary case, but I found many men and women who were only turned on in very limited circumstances – such as when it was guilty, masochistic or sadistic, or story-book romantic situations – and these turn-ons and turn-offs appeared to have been influenced by attitudes passed on in childhood or by childhood experiences.

It seemed to me that inhibitions could restrict our ability to enjoy ourselves in a wide and varied form; they could cause us to be restricted to enjoyment only within narrow limited

circumstances which may not always be available. The public servant's problem was to find partners who were prepared to carry out behaviour which turned him on. He told me he had paid one or two young men to go away with him for weekends – but even they had quickly tired of doing what was necessary to please him.

A widow in her forties said: 'I can't understand why books on relaxation do not feature masturbation; that helps me the most; I'm able to sleep well – and I don't need any tranquillisers or sleeping tablets'. I replied: 'it's always readily available too – that is provided you don't have inhibitions about it'.

One leading psychologist, who appears quite often in t/v and radio programs, told me that at his University clinic they taught women who had sexual expression problems to masturbate. Usually when the inability to masturbate was cured, the problem disappeared. He added: 'masturbation – it's free, it doesn't get anyone pregnant, it's relaxing and enjoyable, always available, you won't get aids or v/d, it doesn't get you into any trouble – it's a wonder it's not more popular!'

Next came a brothel owner and his team.



CHAPTER 17:

A D E E E

The brothel owner, who was one of several I interviewed, came in because he heard that I had made 3 sex therapy tapes in association with psychologist Dr Bob Montgomery.. One of them was about male impotence. He found that a large number of his clients were suffering from this problem, and he wanted to buy a cassette from us so that he could lend it to the men to help them. This was in pre-Viagra days.

I found that there were regular businessmen who had interests in brothels. Some liked their involvement to be anonymous. Some appeared to have an interest largely to get easy access to sex with the girls they employed.

Some prostitutes said that while on the job they could not sustain a regular relationship with a man. They often set

themselves a target period of a couple of years or so on the job, which they hoped would set them up financially. They didn't have any steady relationship with a man during this period.

One girl said: 'One of the difficulties of this business is that often the boss is the only one to whom the girls can relate. He is the only one who really knows about our life and this can create difficulties for him, particularly if he is married. The girls can intervene between him and his wife'. She added: 'I know of one brothel owner who tells every girl on his staff that he is homosexual – so as to avoid this situation'.

The brothel proprietor who purchased our sex education cassettes said that among his girls there were one or two special women who helped men suffering from impotence. He said he regarded them as 'Sex therapists'.

HOW WE PAY FOR HYPOCRISY

Ignorance I found was hand in hand with hypocrisy. Being human, just about every one of us had done something in our life of which we might not be proud – particularly in the sexual area.

It seemed to me that, when we allowed hypocrisy to ride high, it robbed us of some of our best leaders (including royalty). When these leaders set out to achieve improvements for the benefit of our society, powerful interest groups – who might lose out because of these improvements – used their vast resources to dig up some 'dirt' to discredit them, and thus get rid of them.

Hypocrisy regarding homosexuals, and sex in general, allowed some of our best leaders and potential leaders to be denigrated and shamed out of office. The 'dirt' was not dug up on those who complied with the powerful interests – thus condemning us to many second-rate leaders in the world.

A high price for hypocrisy?

REALISATION.

When I joined with a group of psychology trainees for a five-day instruction stint at a retreat in the hills, a psychiatric nurse from U.S.A. leaned across the table at lunch and contributed this line which I have never forgotten: ‘The most important sexual organ in your body is between your ears’.

I came to realise that a main problem of many of the middle age and older women I interviewed was failure to explore the possibilities of their own sexuality: Had they been discouraged as they grew up? Had their mothers praised them for being good cooks and good housekeepers, but never praised them for being a good sexual partner for their husband?

Also, many men I interviewed suffered from performance pressure – believing that an important part of their manhood was having a good strong erection and a large penis, and that they were responsible for a woman’s sexual enjoyment. As many professionals attested, none of these was true – a woman was responsible for her own sexual enjoyment.

‘THE GOOD OLD DAYS’

As I have said, I considered that some people I met were living their lives as though they were in an iron lung (as I had been in 1954) – very restricted (not allowed to do this or that) by rigid ideas and negative attitudes passed on to them as they grew up.

It is very restricting living in an iron lung: Your head sticks out of the end, your body is locked inside. If your ear itches or a mosquito lands on you, you can’t scratch it or knock it off; you can’t blow your nose – a very restricted life indeed. I found that some of these ‘iron lung’-restricted type people expressed the wish that we could ‘go back to the good old days’.

I looked into the history books and found that back in those 'good old days' of Queen Victoria – when a 'nice' woman was expected to not enjoy sex – there were 35,000 prostitutes operating in the City of London alone, and venereal disease was rampant.

'THE POWER OF TWO'

I wanted to write something to the title 'The power of two' because I found that so often when two young people came together with different points of view, if they could reconcile their differences in their relationship, as a pair they became much stronger than they were as individuals.

How many young ones I interviewed seemed not to understand this: they thought differences meant they were 'incompatible' and parted because of this.

Another factor I found was failure to understand the pain and suffering of one's partner. We can all recognize our own pain and suffering.

It made me think of the jogger one sees running along in the sunshine. You tend to say 'Lucky fellow'. But if you get inside that jogger you probably find that his feet are hurting, the dogs and traffic are annoying him, the flies are worrying him, his back is aching, etc. You can't feel this; it all looks great to you.

I found myself thinking: It's a big step in relationships when you can accept someone else's different point of view and also understand *that your partner is suffering pain even though you can't feel it.*

Should we ask our partner 'am I doing something that's causing you suffering and pain?' and then shut up and listen to the answer. Would this simple process save some marriages?

It didn't just apply to young ones. Sometimes I've felt that

my interview helped a couple in their relationship as in this No.3 real life Cameo:

A lady age 79 told me how she and her partner (age 81) of 13 years were ‘really incompatible’. She liked to run around everywhere doing things and could never keep still. He was a man who wanted to sit down in front of the television, watch the football, etc, and he was quite happy just doing that. When I met him later, he said much the same thing and they said there had been a number of occasions when they had nearly broken apart over the past 13 years because of their ‘incompatibility’. I asked her: ‘Would you like to be married to a man who could never keep still and was always running around everywhere keeping himself very busy and occupied?’ After a moment’s thought she said ‘no’. I asked him: ‘Would you like to be married to a girl who sat down and watched the television all day and the football?’ He promptly answered ‘no’. I felt that, at their age with their different styles and interests, they were quite compatible – and when they thought about it they seemed to agree with me.

I wonder how many young couples fall for this trap and conclude they are incompatible because of differences which need to be reconciled and accepted in a relationship?

The 79-year-old woman actually said these very important words: ***‘You’ve got to put up with each other if you want to have the joy of a long term partner’***

‘Putting up with each other’ doesn’t sound very romantic but isn’t it right on the ball in real life?

Many parents I interviewed “shielded” their children from sexual information considering they were “too young”. I felt more thought should be given to expressing the truth to a child at the child’s level of understanding.

I was delighted when our children sat around our dinner table with Dr Maj Brit Bergstrom-Walen, psychologist, Supervisor of Swedish Government's sex education program, and one of the main architects of "The Language of Love".

Some answers she gave enthralled them. In reply to 'at what age are children too young for accurate comprehensive sex education?' – "If they are old enough to read it and be interested, they are old enough".

I became worried that all the information and ideas I had collected would be lost when I dropped dead, and decided to put them down on video tape. My grandson Justin, who at the time was 9, watched the production of this video tape with interest, and also followed the contents quite intelligently. Subsequently, at a school 'show and tell' lesson, where the children were asked to describe something interesting about their parents or grandparents, Justin got up and said his grandfather was knowledgeable in sex education.

The teacher reprimanded Justin for using the word 'sex'. That was in 1982.

I found that many parents think that information about sex at an early age should be kept away from their children, but it has been noticeable that Justin has grown up without any drug problems at all, is a loveable, honest, hard-working, good-natured and healthy young man who dislikes cigarettes and loves his wife and family and his surfing.

ANYONE WHO WRITES A SERIOUS BOOK ABOUT SEX SHOULD HAVE HIS HEAD READ.

In the years following my local 'stardom' as a caller, during the Australian square dancing boom – and subsequently as a much-publicised polio victim – when I walked along the

streets, particularly in Melbourne or Adelaide, every few paces someone would smile at me, or say 'Hi'.

Later, when I became publicly involved in promoting sex education, some people would give me dirty looks – or would look the other way!

It seemed to me that people did not like to hear that the information they had learned from their parents or their priests was wrong – and even worse that they might be wrong! Does no-one love the whistle-blower?

It made me sympathize with Shere Hite, the author of 'The Hite Report', who appeared to upset the egos of male T/V comperes when she revealed that 70% of the women who answered her thousands of questionnaires said that the male penis was not nearly so important in female sexual satisfaction as had been believed; that other types of stimulation were more important.

One Australian male compere was so rude that Dr Shere Hite walked off the set in front of the cameras. She wrote to me from U.S.A. and thanked me for being one of the few men who supported her on her tour of Australia.

For years my own telephone went regularly with people abusing me. Freak callers would ring up at all hours of the night with 'dirty' suggestions. Some people obviously thought of me as a 'sex maniac'. One day I was at the tennis and I heard a woman say to another spectator: 'That's Jim Vickers-Willis's wife'. The other lady in an equally loud stage whisper said: 'poor woman'.

Probably the greatest change of attitude I experienced, as a result of this long stint of research and interviews, was on the subject of NUDITY



CHAPTER 18:

**F E ' E A FF
D E A E!'**

I remember a twenty year old girl patient, with Catholic upbringing, in a hospital where I was having an operation and the nurses told me she would not allow them to take her underwear off when she had a shower – she was so ‘modest’.

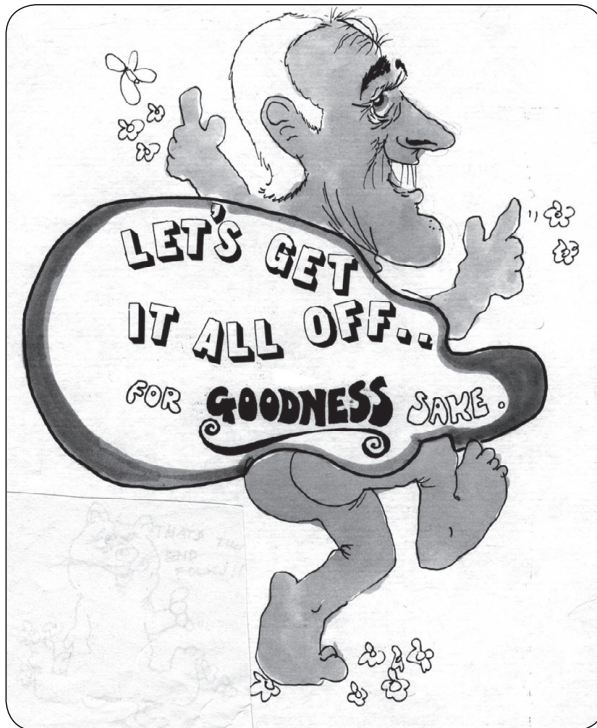
The question I have been asking and keep on asking is ‘Is the teaching of distorted attitudes from a young age causing some people to grow up with distorted attitudes of shame towards their body and towards their human sexuality? Are we putting a premium on being *provocative* rather than being natural? Are we as a community paying a high price for this, not only in sex crimes and child abuse but in such things as marriage breakdown, drug abuse, alcoholism, suicide and nervous breakdown?’

The trouble is that when one talks frankly and honestly about these matters you find you are out of step and regarded as 'way out'. It seems to me, however, that as these things impinge on our basic happiness in life they are worth studying to see where we are going and whether we can find a better way.

After all, if someone had taught us that gardening was a mortal sin or some such, then throughout our life we would be denied this pleasure. Fortunately no-one has proclaimed such a thing and we are able to enjoy building beautiful gardens. But isn't that what has been done about some of these other joyous parts of life?

'LET'S GET IT ALL OFF – FOR GOODNESS SAKE!'

That was the title of the 35-minute video cassette I made as an



aid to help gain Government approval of legal nude bathing beaches around Australia. It was made so that copies could be sent (with compliments) to the Prime Minister, the then Premier of Queensland (Mr. Bjelke Petersen), the Premiers of each other State, plus key Ministers – in the hope that it would educate them and they would start making decisions about this matter based on the facts instead of on ignorance and blind prejudice. The word goodness was underlined.

The video cost about \$11,000 to make, and my wife was annoyed that I would spend so much of our money and said she would kiss my feet if I made a profit. However, we had a surprise result:

It all started back in 1902 when, believe it or not, Australians were not allowed to swim on the beaches in daylight hours – even in neck-to-knee costumes. Then along came William Gocher.

Gocher was the Editor of the Manly Gazette, and he thought this was not good enough. So he went down to the beach, had a swim in daylight and was duly arrested and taken to court. The magistrate actually said to him: ‘Mr. Gocher you have made your point – and you have won the day’.

He threw the case out of court. As a result of that, Australians have been able to swim on the gorgeous Australian beaches ever since – and this has probably become Australia’s greatest recreation.

I became interested in the subject of nudity when I realized that a number of the people who came to see me with severe negative sexual problems were saying things like ‘Mother never allowed father to see her in the nude throughout their married life’ or ‘Dad always undressed in the bathroom with the door

closed', or 'Mother and dad always made love with the lights turned out'.

I wondered, could these ugly attitudes towards nudity and shame in the human body play a part in people's sexual problems? I started to ask this when I was interviewed on the radio and on the television. One Australian psychologist for whom I have a good respect strongly denied this as a factor.

Also, in one of my earliest interviews, the deputy head of NSW detective force said: 'the day we get legal nude bathing beaches around Australia, that day you will see a drop in all the sex crimes; what we need so badly in this whole area of life is more openness and honesty'. That was in 1966.

One day the President of the Free Beach Association, Ted Weston, and his wife Mary, who later became the President of the Australian Nudist Federation, invited us down to a nude beach which was not yet legal. Beth went in great doubt: She was sure Channel 9 would have a television camera up in the bushes!

I will never forget arriving at this beach, seeing all these people without clothes, deciding we had better take ours off and then sitting down on the sand feeling very embarrassed.

Ted Weston brought some of the male nudists around to meet us, and they stood there talking to us – their penises dangling just about at our head level. They did not notice, but we did.

However, after about half an hour sitting on the beach, we both decided to go for a swim. It was a glorious day, a north wind and the waves were gently rolling in.

Swimming in the nude in that gorgeous clear blue water was just heavenly. During the day I had 6 swims and Beth had 5. We thoroughly enjoyed ourselves.

At the end of the day, I plucked up enough courage to walk along the beach with Ted Weston and be introduced to all the

various groups of nudists. It took quite a brave effort. We were impressed by the fact that the nudists – there were about 400 of them on the beach – cleared up all their rubbish and took it home with them in plastic bags, leaving the beach spotless. This beach has since been declared a legal nude bathing beach by the Victorian Labor Government.

We didn't have anything more to do with the subject of nudity for 12 months, then our daughter Sue, son-in-law Rob and grandchildren Justin and Sascha were offered a caravan for a week-end at River Valley, a nudist holiday resort in Echuca, Victoria. They came home and told us they had 'had the most marvellous holiday', and were so enthusiastic that we booked ourselves in.

I'll never forget our first night at this nudist camp. The previous week we had been in Sydney, living in a flat, and next door to us, with adjoining windows, was an elderly lady. As a result, whenever Beth and I were wandering around in our underwear or some such, we would keep the lights out in our flat, so as not to embarrass her. We finished up falling over shoes, etc.

As we started to undress at River Valley Nudist Holiday Resort, in Echuca, Beth went over to close the Venetian blinds. I said: 'what are you doing that for? Everyone outside is in the nude anyway'.

I suddenly realized we had a new freedom!

Everyone around us seemed perfectly comfortable without clothes – especially as the weather was hot – but I found it took quite a lot of courage for me to walk across the grass and the tennis court, to go to the shop.

Among our first memorable impressions was that everyone was all shapes and all sizes. There were very few people

with the sort of beautiful figures you see in glossy magazines. Some women had breasts which hung down, others seemed to stick out the side, others were small; men had penises and testicles which hung down; others had little penises which were all scrunched up. Enormous diversity.

At this stage I was looking, and interested – but once ‘acclimatised’ I found that I never noticed these parts any more, and they became no more noticeable than their feet or other parts of the body.

That weekend, we attended our first nude rock’n’roll dance in the pavilion. I’ll never forget our reaction as we walked into that hall and saw guitarists and the drummer and other musicians all playing and singing – wearing nothing but guitar straps! Out on the floor, men and women were rock’n’rolling with no clothes, or just odd bits of clothing which suited the temperature.

When we went to bed in our chalet we admitted it was an incredible experience and we also noted that, although there was plenty of drink being consumed, everyone behaved themselves even better than we would have expected at a normal dance.

I subsequently called square dances for the nudists. When they first arrived, my square dance band were told that they did not have to take their gear off if they didn’t want to.

It was 42 degrees Celsius that day, and, while the band were unpacking, the band leader’s wife Jane disappeared and came back about 5 minutes later naked. She said: ‘I felt a bit conspicuous with my clothes on’. That was the end of it – the rest of the band took their clothes off, and they were all comfortable.



*A dancing champion couple gave this beautiful exhibition dance
which was much appreciated by the nudists.
Picture taken from TV screen (our video)*

In fact, quite soon we were starting to see virtue in the nudist movement. People generally were more considerate to one another than in the dressed community; being without clothes made people more equal:

You would be standing in the shower chatting to another fellow and he would turn out to be a low paid manual worker, and then in the next shower would be the managing director of a large company. Once the clothes were off, you liked them or not based on whether they were nice friendly people.

We also found that our grandchildren were able to run around without clothes at 10 o'clock at night, bouncing on the trampoline by torchlight, without any fear of being attacked. This contrasted with the fact that we lived close to the beach at Brighton and my wife would not walk along the seafront at 10 o'clock at night, fully dressed, without fear of being attacked.

This factor was highlighted one weekend when a 'bikie'

came across the river and entered the nudist camp. The bikies camp across the river and look across at us nudists swimming. We don't mind. But this fellow was a rather rough-looking type, and someone said 'I'd keep an eye out for him.'

One of the regular nudist women said: 'oh. I wouldn't be too worried about him; once he's been amongst us for a few hours, he will be de-fused'. She was recognising that public nudity is natural – and not provocative like wearing skimpy clothing.

One afternoon, a truck loaded with young yahoos, drove in the gates and circled the inside of the nudist camp, with a load of pretty rough-looking young men shouting and cat-calling.. The nudists closed the gates, surrounded the truck, and threatened to strip the clothes off all the young yahoos. This really terrified them. They could not get out of the gates fast enough, and never came back!

Now the battle for the legal nude bathing beaches was joined in full force. Nude swimmers who dared to use secluded beaches were arrested .

So, South Australia's great Premier Don Dunstan declared a legal nude beach at Maslin's Beach, about 20 miles out of Adelaide. It attracted big crowds – and also lots of 'lookers' on the cliff-top. I am told that on the second weekend Don Dunstan personally walked along the cliff-top and spoke to the 'lookers'.

Within a very short time there were practically no 'lookers': The nudist beach was packed with people, very well-behaved – and it was said that the 'lookers' mostly had come down off the cliffs and were enjoying using the legal nude beach themselves!

A year after Maslin's was opened, I checked with the Officer-In-Charge at the nearest Police Station, Christie's Beach. He

told me that Maslin's gave the least trouble of all the beaches along the coast.

In Perth, in West Australia, it was found that the Commonwealth Government controlled a stretch of beach within 5 miles of the city, and the nudists used this as a nude beach. The State Government had no power to throw them off this stretch. Nevertheless, they were for years denied all facilities (such as toilets) – yet the crowds grew and grew.

It was reported to me once that on a very hot day at Swanbourne Beach a head count was taken and more than 20,000 nude swimmers went on and off the nudist beach during the day. Perhaps this was exaggerated, but a neighbouring 'dressed beach' had only a few hundred swimmers.

In Queensland, no legal nude bathing beaches were allowed – but the naturists used certain beaches without official sanction. From time to time someone was arrested – and it was an ongoing battle.

Into the fray came the Rev. Reford Corr. He was the President of the Geelong Inter-church Council, when someone complained about 'goings-on' at Point Impossible Beach – which meant that people were swimming there in the nude (this was the beach where Beth and I had had our first experience of nude swimming).

The Rev. Corr was asked to write an official letter of complaint from the Inter-Church Council, and he said he 'could not complain about a book until he had read it, or about a film until he had seen it' – and the same applied to this beach: He asked if some members of the Council would inspect the beach before making the complaint. Nobody volunteered, so the Rev. Corr decided to go and have a look for himself:

He arrived at the beach on a holiday afternoon, climbed

up over the sand dunes and found scores of people swimming there in the nude. He said he recognized some of them – they were his parishioners!

They were amazed to see their Vicar coming along the beach, and many of them were also much embarrassed.

However, the Rev. Corr observed that the behaviour on the beach was excellent: 'little children playing cricket with their parents and grandparents and there was nothing objectionable at all'. He added: 'it was a warm day, and I decided to join them. I peeled off my clothes and went for a swim. It was great – and the people were so friendly, and delighted when I joined them.' He has since told this story on our video.

I announced on the television and radio that, although I lived beside the Bay, I would not swim in the sea until legal nude bathing beaches were allowed in the State of Victoria. Fortunately I only had to hold out for 5 years, and then the new Labor Government in Victoria declared 4 legal nude beaches.

One of them gets so packed on hot days that the nudist mothers and fathers sometimes have to walk as much as a mile from their cars, often carrying their children, to get to their beach. I personally arranged with a local land-owner for land to be made available for an urgently needed big new car park near the beach, and relayed the fact that this was available to the local Council, but there was no response at all.

The Victorian Government made a survey of Councils – asking their response to the idea of having a legal nude bathing beach in their district. The responses mostly were full of excuses. One council would say its beach was too exposed, there was not enough cover around it to hide the nudists; the next one would say its beach had too much ti-tree around it – there was too much cover in which 'perverts' could hide!

In this atmosphere we made our video cassette: top television cameraman Marcus Herman sympathised with us and reduced all his charges: On one occasion his \$15,000 camera was nearly thrown in the sea by a middle-aged lady nudist who suddenly objected to the filming.

There were now legal nude bathing beaches in all states of Australia except Queensland.

One thing which tended to slow the interest in nudism was the skin cancer scare. The nudists have a motto 'From eleven till three slip under a tree' – and they are mostly very careful about their skin.

However, after 30 years contact with thousands of nudists, I must say I have practically never seen anyone with skin cancer – which makes me think that there could be some re-thinking needed about this subject, too.

We delivered our video cassette to all the various State Premiers – with compliments – and, as you can see, it, and the many other efforts by many people in different parts of Australia, achieved some result.

From our personal point of view, the video result was interesting: After we'd sent off all these complimentary copies to the Members of Parliament, we showed the video to the naturists at River Valley, and some of them ordered copies. The beautifully-produced Sun and Health Naturist Magazine asked me to write an article about the video and then decided to promote it. More people ordered copies, and now we have sold more than 1,600 of these video cassettes – making a handsome profit!

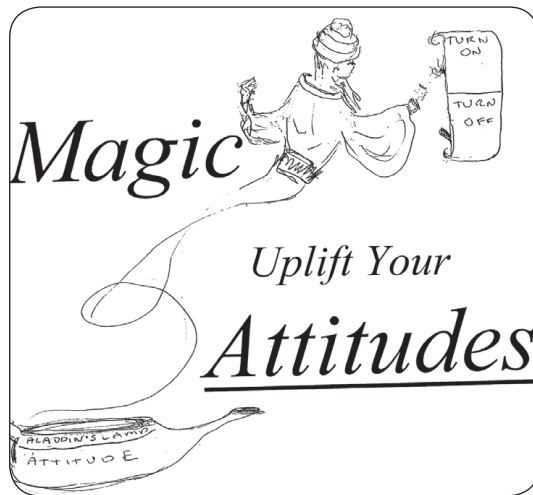
Yes, my wife kept her promise!



CHAPTER 19:

B D A DE

While we are discussing enjoyment in the sun, sometimes in talking publicly about negative attitudes I say: ‘We are often *blind* to our own negative attitudes which block our enjoyment: think of a blind man lying out trying to sunbake and he’s blind to the fact that he’s facing the wrong way to catch the sun – so he does not get warmed. But the sun’s out there ready to warm him if he *changes his attitude.*’



Attitudes – you can't see them, where do they come from?

So this leads us to Solution No.2 which is a big step towards Solution No.3 at the end of this story

Everyone thinks their attitudes are 'normal'. Of course they do. So, how does one see whether we've got the right helpful attitude or not?

I put much detail into the previous chapter about nudity because, for me, it was one of my biggest changes in attitude of all – and as a result over the past 30 years I have had some of the best holidays of my life amongst the nudists.

I remember having to muster courage to walk along that first nude bathing beach and be introduced to people – in the raw. It was about as frightening as taking my first steps after polio. I think my feelings would have matched those of the vast majority of people in our community.

Of course, for most people it doesn't matter anyway. Who wants to get your gear off? Most would say 'I can take it or leave it', and it doesn't matter. But for me it was important as part

of the sex education information and experience I was putting together.

However, as a result of that change in attitude I gained 30 years of very happy holidays amongst the nudists plus some very good friends I would never have met. That's what interested me – *the change in my attitude gave me that extra happiness in my life. It also benefited all our family.*

As soon as you talk about attitudes, people say 'how on earth can I see whether I have got the right attitudes or not?' One answer, as pointed out later, is that you can see the **results** of your attitude.

Chauvinist males, with an attitude to dominate women and exploit them, can see nothing wrong with themselves. However, they can, if they wish, observe the long-term results in their partner – and in her responses, particularly in their sex life.

Similarly, a woman or man with a negative attitude towards sexuality, which they consider perfectly normal, can, if they wish, see the result in the lack of sexual enjoyment in their own life, and very often in the frustration of their partner.

As I conducted this long survey I gradually formed some controversial opinions:

So often I heard people say things such as: 'Sex is okay as long as it is tied in with real love and tenderness'.

Particularly in recent years I have had to stop myself saying: 'balderdash! It is that sort of attitude which is crippling so many millions of men and women'.

I found it just as dangerous as the statement 'Sex is only for the procreation of children'. Just how dishonest that statement is can quickly be seen if you ask yourself – 'How long is it since I had sex with the aim of having a child?'

It seemed clear to me that sexual expression is unique. It is

unreproducible in any other life experience. It does not need to be tied to love, marriage, having babies – or in fact any other ‘excuse’ which people with guilt feelings about sexual enjoyment attach to it. Sexual expression I felt stood alone in its own right: it did not need any qualifying to make it ‘right’ or ‘un-sinful’ or ‘worthwhile’. By itself, sex was all of those things.

That’s not to say that it could not be misused. It was plain that very often it was misused – particularly by the guilty, prudish, uptight ones. As with any of the other great life forces, sex could win for you what you wanted in life when you used it constructively.

After reading the above, do you think that some of our generally accepted attitudes towards a natural thing like nudity are ridiculous – and create problems and barriers to a simple pleasure where none really need exist?

SOLUTION NO 2: Check your vital attitudes... What other accepted negative attitudes outlined by people in this book, if discarded, could improve things and maybe add some extra interest and magic to your life?

Whether one is inclined negative or positive towards sex can be quite subtle: which of these true statements would you have been ***most likely*** to say:

‘Sex is just one small part of a relationship’ or

‘If the right attitudes are present, sex will bring long term interest and magic into a relationship’

SMOKING AND SEX

When someone is afflicted with cancer or heart trouble or some such, I ask the question ‘did he or she smoke?’ So often the answer is ‘Yes’. But it will more often than not be quickly

followed by some comment that the illness is hereditary in the family, or it's in their genes or due to some traumatic event in their life, etc. The idea that it is self-inflicted is just not acceptable.

This is understandable, but it means that the young ones never get the true message – about how deadly smoking is – conveyed to them by the experience of their respected adults.

Similarly I found with sex:

When marriage and other relationships are in trouble, I ask 'what about your sex life?'

Again, my experience has been that people would shy away from this as though they were admitting a personal failure. I found defensive answers – with all matters other than sex being covered. Sometimes in answer to my question the person would say 'You couldn't expect us to have a satisfying sexual relationship when we have all these things going on.' Quite often I felt it was the other way around – all these negative things going on were likely the result of an unsatisfying sexual relationship.

Again I felt that the young ones in families missed out on a vital message – understanding that Mum and Dad's difficulties were being compounded if not caused by their ignorance and unworkable ideas and attitudes about sex and how to make a sexual relationship fulfilling and satisfying in the long term.

I felt if the experience of the parents were conveyed honestly to the young ones it would cause those young ones to have greater respect for their own sexuality, to show more interest in how to use it constructively to make life happier – and cause them to question some of the attitudes being passed on.

BONSAING OUR CHILDREN

A bonsai nurseryman – who specialized in making 40 foot trees grow to only about 18 inches height by restricting their roots in pots in early years – had us speculating on whether restricting children's minds with ignorance and misinformation on the vital subject of sex had a similar effect in stunting their sexual development for the rest of their life.

The bonsai man explained that a tree taken out of the pot later in life would not grow much; the earlier it was removed from the restrictive pot the greater its chance of blooming into what nature had intended – ie the higher it would be likely to grow.

Discussing this with psychologists, I found them questioning whether exactly the same thing applied to our children:

The earlier we started informing them – giving them positive attitudes and accurate information about their sexuality – the better their chance of developing into mature, well-adjusted men and women. (Incidentally, although the Japanese aim to create a miniature model of a normal tree, the Chinese originators used bonsai to distort and twist the tree).

Is our bonsaing of children producing some distorted, twisted adults who commit such things as sex crimes?.

Which brings me to the advice – the only advice on sex – which a woman from a country town told me was given to her by her mother just before she married. The advice was: 'You can give him all the sex he wants on your honeymoon. Once the honeymoon is over you must make it quite clear to him, it's once a week – every Sunday night after he's had his bath'.



That sounds funny, but it was generous compared to the attitudes towards sex by some ex-husbands and wives as related to me by some divorced people.

A fifty-five-year-old man, who had flown over from Tasmania, greeted me on the phone one fine Saturday morning to say he had just got his first girlfriend and found he could not perform sexually. I said: 'why don't you buy a vibrator?'

‘A vi... vi... vi... vibrator?’ gasped the man. ‘Where would I get one of those?’

I told him the address of the sex shop in Swanston St, Melbourne.

About twenty minutes later the phone went again, and the man said he just couldn’t pluck up enough courage to go into the sex shop; would I mind going in and buying it for him?

I live eight miles from the City but I went in and there he was standing outside the sex shop in shorts and long socks.

We went in and bought a vibrator – and the sex shop gave me a discount because I had bought so many for various people. Then we went off to a City bookshop where they sold sex education books – including mine.

Back he went to Tasmania with vibrator and books, and I wondered how he got on...I have never heard any more from him.

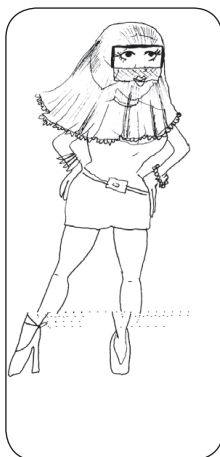
I heard women who enjoyed lots of sex described as ‘nymphomaniacs’; men who enjoyed lots of sex as ‘sex maniacs’ and particularly older men who still retained a healthy interest in sex as ‘dirty old men’.

I wondered how many of those using these descriptions were simply people who could not enjoy sex very much themselves – or in limited circumstances – and were just making an excuse for their own failure by denigrating a normally sexually successful person in this way?

CHAPTER 20:

(E FF E DB A
F E)

Millions of women in another culture are comfortable with the burqa (the dress which covers them from head to foot with a narrow slit to see through) in the name of 'sexual modesty', but from the point of view of our own culture I have felt we can only achieve real freedom when we throw off our 'mind burqa'. The question I am asking is: are women in our own society accepting man-made restrictions often put forward in the name of morality, religion and modesty – which, in similar fashion to female circumcision, rob them of the happiness available to them naturally through their powerful female sexuality?



There is no doubt that my interviews mostly showed that in our society men were asking for sex more than women. It was the woman who usually had the 'headache'.

But a medical researcher said that women were far better equipped physically to enjoy sex than men. He said that the female capacity for orgasm was so great that it had never been fully measured by researchers. Female subjects under research had often reached more than 50 consecutive orgasms, whereas if a man could ejaculate four or five times in one great night he was considered terrific.

The 'highs' and 'freak-outs' which were so desperately pursued by drug users were like nothing compared to the sense of absolute exhilaration produced for a woman by one healthy orgasm. It made me wonder.

One woman in her 60's was typical of many older ones I interviewed. . She said: 'it is more difficult for me to enjoy sex these days. The walls of my vagina are thin, my husband takes

longer to ejaculate and often it is quite painful. Men don't seem to understand this'.

ESCAPE FROM THE PARENT TRAP: BE YOURSELF

One woman said: 'My husband's mother, who has been on her own for many years, is like a clutching hand; she's ever-ready to reach out and suck the life out of our marriage. As soon as there is a difficulty between my husband and myself, my husband tends to go to her – and she's ever-ready to support him and criticise me'.

It seemed to me that sometimes when parents intervened like this they were just human beings fulfilling their own needs of companionship.

FREE TO GROW

From this point of view, it seemed that one of the best things anyone could have was parents who were able to express themselves freely in their close personal (sexual) relationship, and obtain closeness and fulfilment in life from each other. It seemed to me that this type of parent had less personal need. They were getting what they needed in life from each other.

This enabled children to go out into the world free, to stand on their own feet, to grow, to live – *and also to enjoy that most precious parent/adultchild relationship without damaging their own marriage.*

A marriage guidance president told me he considered that a high percentage of relationship breakdown was influenced by failure of one or other or both of the partners to break away satisfactorily – to mature and become adults in their own right rather than just living according to the desires and sometimes failed ideas and attitudes of the parent.

THEY ARE WATCHING

Remember the priest: 'Give me a child from age 3 to age 7 and I'll give you a good Catholic.'

If you have children be aware: Dad walks across the kitchen and pats Mum on the bottom, and Mum looks pleased. There's a message there for the kids who are watching.

Alternatively, Mum jumps away and snarls 'Leave me alone; can't you think of anything else!' There is a message there, too.

Those kids may only be three or four or five but they are picking up that message, positive or negative, at their most impressionable age; attitudes are being formed which stick. What message did you and I receive – and pass on without thinking about it?

Our three children, Sue, Peter and Tony, all married and we gained ten grand-children, two great grand-children – and I also gained a recumbent wheelchair –

Jim pedals his way to a new lease of life

■ By Ben Keys

JIM VICKERS-WILLIS does not let much stand in his way.

After rising to prominence as one of Australia's most popular dance callers during the square dance boom of the 1950s, Mr Vickers-Willis was struck down by polio in 1954 which permanently affected more than half his body.

He overcame the setback to pen a controversial book in 1974, which took a revolutionary look at family relationships and attitudes to sex.

The 82-year-old then entered the life assurance game and is employed full-time as a financial planner.

Polio caused Mr Vickers-Willis, of Brighton, Victoria, to rely on a cane and electric wheelchair to get around in later years.

But, rather than accept this fate, the feisty octogenarian has leapt out of the chair.

He recently took possession of a highly modified, recumbent wheelchair created to meet his needs and now zips about town at speeds that would turn most pensioners pale.



On the go: Jim Vickers-Willis, 82, says his life has been transformed by his new highly modified wheelchair. He wants to spread the word. PICTURE: JEFF HENDERSON

He has been tearing around the streets of Bunbury where he is holidaying.

Even during the few weeks that he has had the machine, Mr Vickers-Willis said regular pedalling had already

increased strength in his weaker leg. He is determined to let people in wheelchairs know there was more to life than being pushed from place to place by carers.

"There must be thousands and thousands of people out there who it has never occurred to that they can get out of that hole," he said.

"And it is a hole — once you're in a wheelchair you're pretty much stuck.

"It's hard to imagine if you've never been there."

Mr Vickers-Willis said one of the greatest pleasures provided by his new toy was a change in how people perceived him.

"When you get out and about in one of these things people treat you differently," he said.

"A lot of people look quite envious and rather than seeing you as an old boy in a wheelchair they look on you as some sort of sporting hero."

He regularly pedals up to 11km on the machine that "has transformed my life".

He believes there is a huge opportunity for the wheelchair-bound to get out and about.

"The beauty of recumbent wheelchairs is that they can be designed to meet the needs of particular disabilities," he said.

"They're very safe and certainly much safer than having me walking about."

*The West Australian,
April 18th, 2001.*

As I pedalled around I had plenty of time to think about some of the issues raised in my many interviews. I concluded that sex could be many different things for different people in different circumstances; that many young ones today believed they had broken away from the old fashioned prison of prudishness as they

pursued a 'with it' path of permissiveness – plenty of condoms for 'safe sex', with quite often plenty of partners?

But I found that *prudishness and permissiveness were just two sides of the same coin*. . . Both the prudes and the very permissive had one thing in common – they showed that they *did not respect sex*.

Where did they learn these attitudes? What was the missing main ingredient?

Was the missing part the real sexual revolution we needed – to start passing on to our young ones a positive wholesome attitude of valuing and respecting their human sexuality; giving time and thought to learning how to use it constructively, to enrich their life and enrich their relationships?

So, is the main problem relating to sex the fact that so many people do not treat it with respect; that we need a new *Culture of Sex* — respecting it as a great source of fun and interest, amongst other things?

'LUST THAT LASTS LONGER'

I heard some signs of change in thinking: *One young woman who was asked the difference between lust and love replied: 'love is lust that lasts longer'.*

My psychologist son Tony has a professional saying 'your feelings are the lens to your attitude'. When I questioned him, he added that it was not just our feelings but *our words and our behaviour which disclosed our attitudes*.

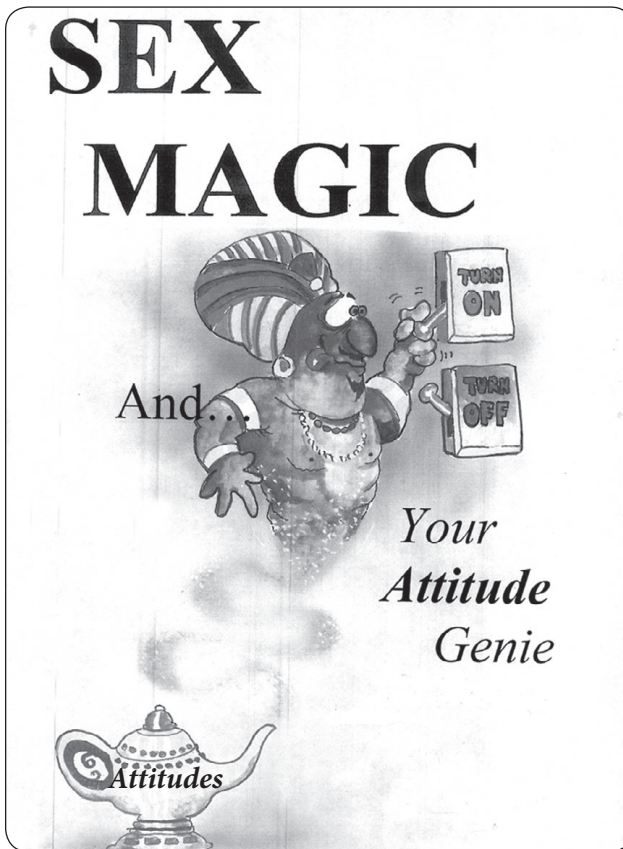
You could not 'see' your own attitude to check if it was the right attitude or not. But if you wanted to find out about your own attitude towards something such as sex, you could check up on what you had to *say* about it – and also on how you *behaved* towards this important part of life.

T h e M a g i c o f L i f e

He added that what you could see, if you wished, was your behaviour and how you talked about things. Did you talk positively about sex? Did you behave positively towards sex? Did you treat it with respect?

For instance if you had had passed on to you an attitude that it was sinful or filthy to watch a beautiful sunset or similar natural pleasure, you would be able to detect your own silly destructive built-in attitude by checking up on what you usually had to *say* about beautiful sunsets, also by checking your *behaviour* (ie whether you could enjoy them the way other people could).

Which leads us naturally to the most important Solution No.3 . . .



First, a quote of Erica Jong: 'Sex is a profound drive for human beings because it can serve so many purposes. It can convince us that we can still feel. It can fill us with hope. It can enliven the mind as well as the senses. It is a universal curiosity, a need to reach out and give ourselves to others, as well as a need to take others in'.

Is the Solution to be found within this question: How much time and thought and respect do we give to this profound human drive, our sexuality – to learning about it; about how to use it most effectively to enrich our life – in our own par-

ticular circumstances – and get the maximum joy for ourselves and our partner, too, if we are lucky enough to have one?

SOLUTION NO 3: *Change: Check up on your own behaviour and what you have to say about sex – and see whether you think a change of some attitudes may add magic in your life and in the lives of your children.*

SEE THE LIGHT AND GO FOR IT!

Changing attitudes is not hard; what is difficult is clearly seeing the need and recognising the benefit of making the change. I heard of Pentridge (Melbourne) prisoners, under the long term guidance of great Roman Catholic prison priest Father John Brosnan, changing from crook to good. He showed them the light – and they went for it (ie they changed their attitude).

PHILOSOPHY OF SEX

A nineteen-year-old footballer, who perused an early trial copy of the manuscript, caused me to add this last bit of the Solution when he said he felt I should include some clear suggestions of what sort of attitudes I thought would be helpful to men and women. . . **For men** – I quoted a girl who complained ‘I feel that some of my men friends think of me and my body as just a life support system for a vagina.’ I suggested we might expect to turn her on more by greater concentration on her other good qualities and attractions. **For women** – Take personal pride and satisfaction in fulfilling your partner’s needs and being a good lover (just as you would in being a good cook), while at the same time enjoying as much as possible of the pleasure and other ‘Magic of Life’ benefits available to those who have a positive attitude towards sex.

Are we satisfied to have this great natural force - our sexuality - hi-jacked by those who use it to suit their own purposes?

Are we satisfied to accept the lack of joy existing in many marriage relationships: the use of sex as a “whipping horse” by advertisers who want to control our buying; by some spiritual leaders who want to create guilt and to control us; by some media taking advantage of this created guilt to sell their product with lots of boobs and scandals; by some ill-informed young ones believing “it’s just for fun only”; by oldies who want the young ones to be just like them (for better or for worse)?

Hey, wasn’t that what the old Kenyan women with their razors wanted?

CHAPTER 21:

B E C C E E D

Thirty five years ago my wife and I were apart for a year and one week. From my point of view, it was very hard but very educational. We made it back together. With some vital adjustments, we have been very happy, and are thankful.

It's a wonderful experience looking back — going through all the trials and tribulations and times of joy together, the precious items — the sharing of life and memories; you reach old age and you still like each other and get joy out of each other — that's the triumph; that's the magic. You've got to be lucky too — but if you aim for it, and hang in there, you're more likely to get it.

How often now, in the middle of the night in bed, I want to have the beautiful feeling I get when she puts her arm around me — and she does. Wonderful! Yes, magic! We human beings

need this reassurance that we are wanted — and the release of tension that goes with it, too.

Hey, I've got to stop for a moment: Beth's calling me to come and see something on the tele. She gets more pleasure out of it, if I see it too. **Getting pleasure out of sharing — that's it.**

That was intended to be the end but, as I opened this story with the unhappiness of our parting, I thought I would like to conclude with this happy Cameo:

BETH'S BIG BAND

Beth said she wanted to go somewhere where there was a big band for her 60th birthday. I sought around for a suitable function but then the Rotary Club approached me and asked me would I call for a square dance at Box Hill Town Hall to raise money for their polio fund. It was about the same time as Beth's 60th birthday, so I made an arrangement to do the charity square dance and donated to the night the 13-piece Australian Show Band.

The arrangement was that I would call the square dancing for the several hundred dancers there up until 10.30pm, then the Show Band would march in and take over for the rest of the night.

Everyone was sworn to secrecy and Beth knew nothing about it. She came to the dance thinking it was just an ordinary charity square dance – and she was down on the floor as usual doing her job of organising the dancers and helping people to join in. We raised \$7,500 for the Fund. We had a 14-foot high projection screen and some of the square dances were demonstrated on this screen to help new people join in.

At 10.30 p.m. the lights were dimmed and my little square dance band played 'Happy Birthday' in march time. In marched the 13-piece Australian Show Band with their brass instruments

T h e M a g i c o f L i f e

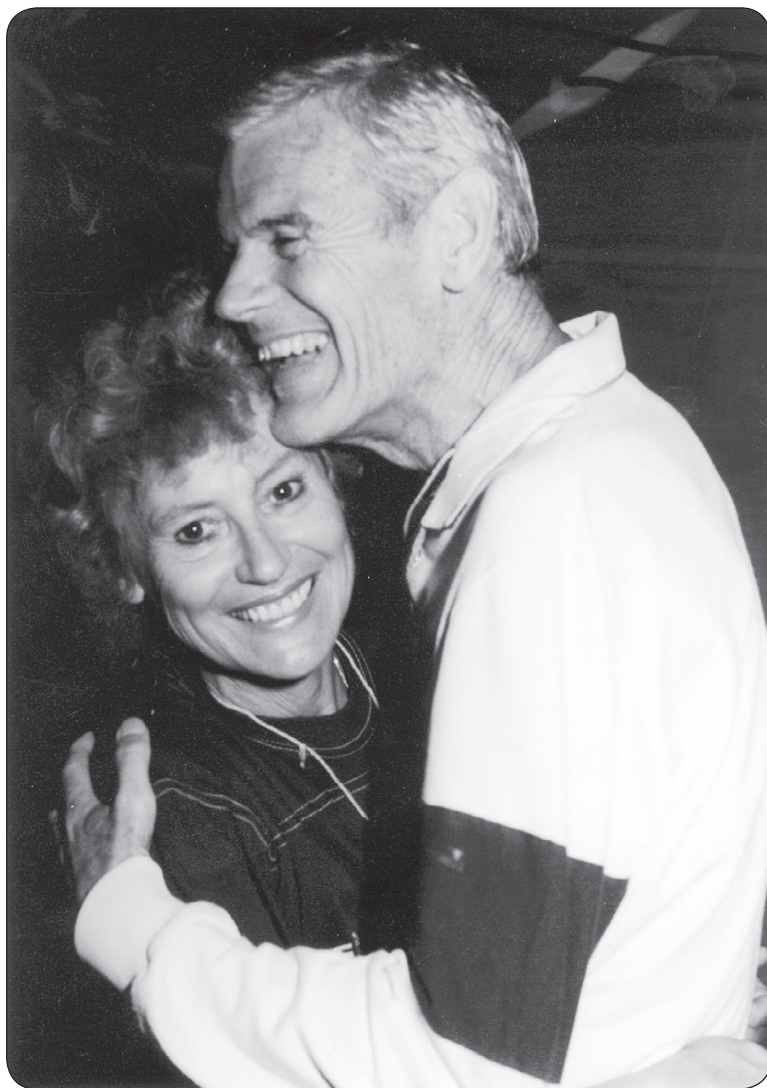
glistening in the spotlights. They were led in by our little granddaughter Lindy. The band clustered in a circle around the astonished Beth and played a happy birthday fanfare on their trumpets.

While the band was setting up on the stage, we flashed on to the big screen a video series showing Beth ‘This is your life’. We saw her all the way from a small child, the day she was engaged to me, with her children and her grandchildren, etc.

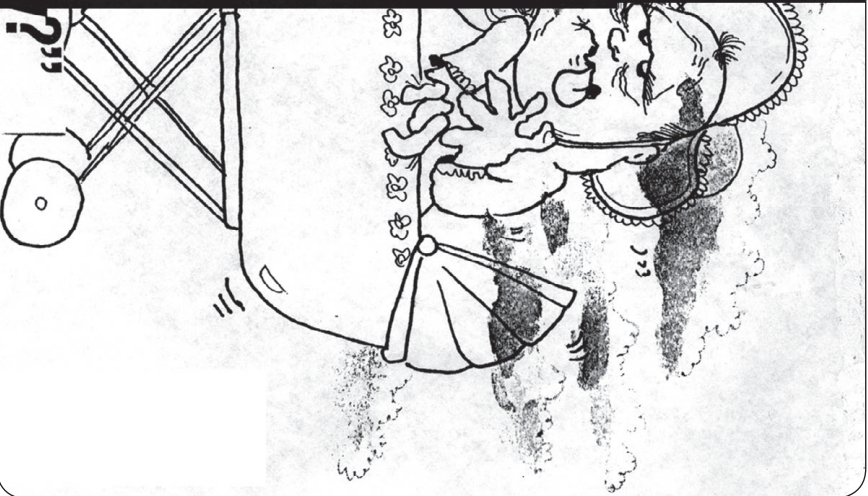
Then the Show Band struck up ‘In the Mood’ – our favourite dance tune.

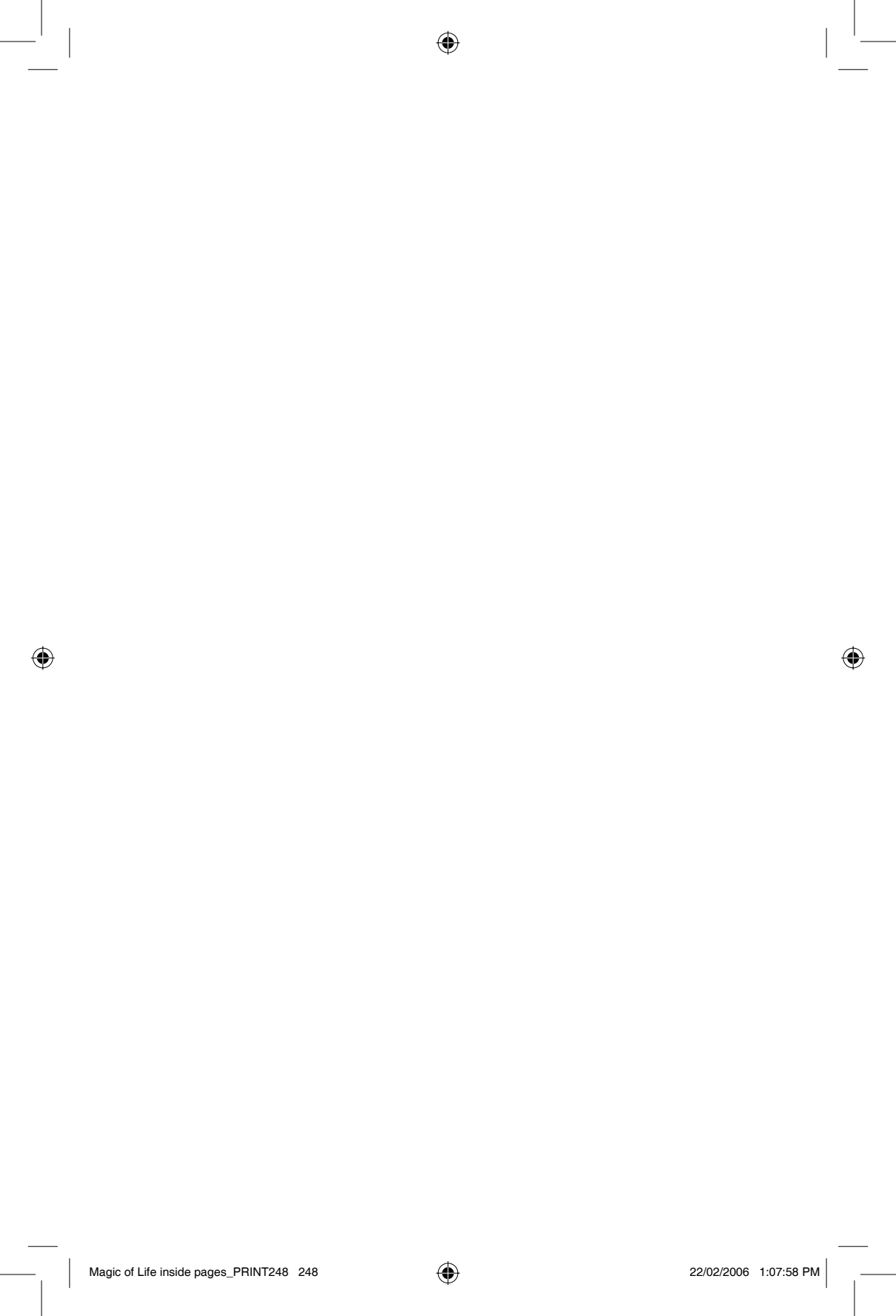
The spotlights turned on me – and Beth called to me to come down off the stage and dance with her all alone out in the middle of that big ballroom, with hundreds of dancers cheering and clapping. She was 60, I was 69, but it was just like our wedding night!

Jim Vickers - Wills

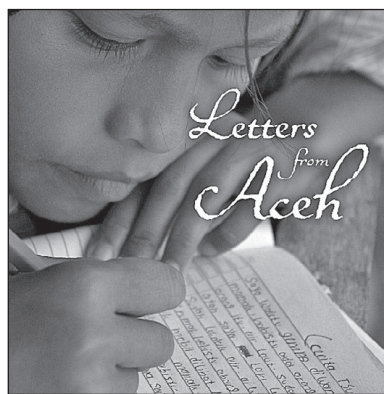
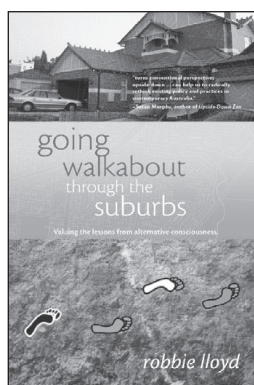
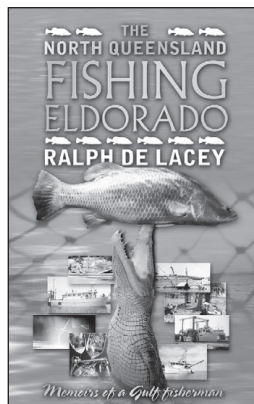
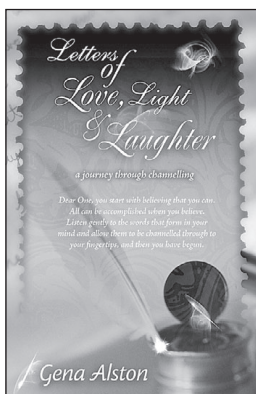
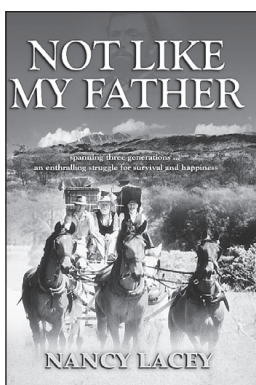
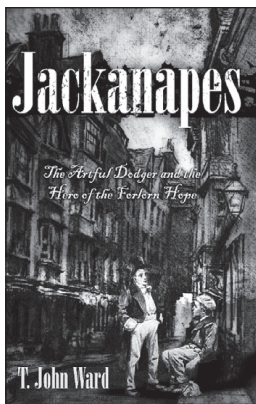


ARE WE FORCING ON TO OUR CHILDREN SOME POISONOUS HABITS AND ATTITUDES WHICH CAN SPELL DEATH TO THE 'MAGIC OF LIFE' AVAILABLE IN A RELATIONSHIP?





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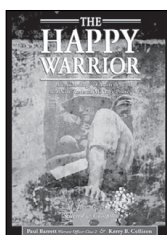
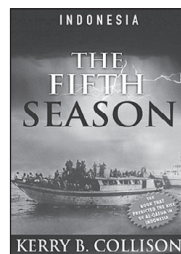
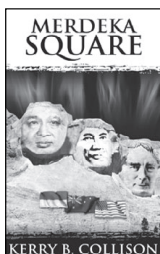


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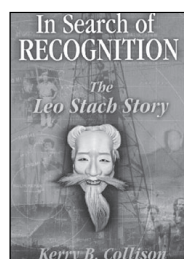
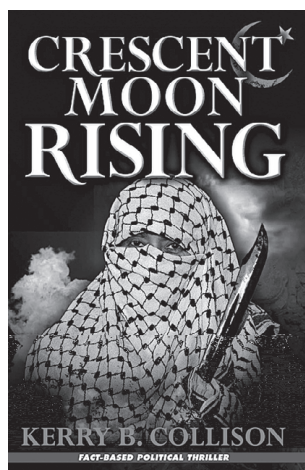
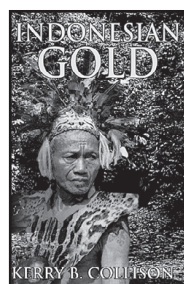
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