THE COUNTER-REVOLUTION

Mortal Sins

The sexual revolution was based on a lie. Judith Reisman has spent thirty years uncovering the truth.

TOM BETHELL

JUDITH Reisman was a "red diaper" baby, born in 1935. Her parents were members of the Communist Party and for a while she too belonged to a subversive organization—the Labor Youth League. Much later, when she received a Justice Department grant to examine the role of pornography in sexual abuse, law-enforcement officials knew about her background but weren't interested. One even told her that it would be easier to give the grant to her than to a white-bread whole-milk member of the Christian Right. Meanwhile the sex-studying, sex-obsessed sexology professionals did see Mrs. Reisman as a threat to their way of life, and they conducted their own investigation. But they weren't interested in her political background either. Perhaps the whole concept of subversion was too close to home for them.

Judith grew up in Los Angeles in a world of radical politics and bourgeois domesticity. She attended Fairfax High and L.A. City College, went to picnics on the beach. "I lived at a wonderful time," she said. Her father, Matthew Gelernter, was a Communist Party member and a businessman who later joined the Teamsters Union. He always came home, never drank, always loved her and supported her. Her mother "welcomed me home every day." They were working for a political revolution but were shocked by the sexual revolution that ensued. In 1954 Judith married a Polish immigrant and within ten years had four daughters. "The hedge of protection about my life was not breached until 1966," she recalled.

The Reisman family had moved to Milwaukee, and in that year she found out that her 10-year-old daughter Jennie had been raped. The culprit was a 13-year-old boy who lived in the duplex apartment upstairs. It turned out that he had perpetrated many sexual assaults on other children. His father eventually packed him off to relatives overseas, even as his younger brother was embarking on a copycat career of juvenile crime. Mrs. Reisman by then knew that the boys' father kept a stack of *Playboy*s out in the open at their home. But she was a good 1960s liberal and didn't think much of it; tacky, yes; stupid, maybe; exploitative, no doubt. But hey, there is such a thing as the First Amendment.

Jennie didn't want her mother to tell anyone what had happened. Eventually she did tell an aunt, who listened sympathetically and said: "Well, Judy, she may have been looking for this herself. Children are sexual from birth, you know." Judy was shocked by this and knew it wasn't true. Then she spoke to an old school chum who had gone to Berkeley. "You know," Carole said, "she may have been looking for this. Children are sexual from birth."

Judith Reisman had entered the World According to Kinsey. Chapter five of Kinsey's first volume, *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male*, published in 1948, was titled "Early Sexual Growth and Activity." It claimed that orgasms of infants had been recorded and timed by trained researchers with stop watches. The Kinsey report was then and remains to this day the sole "scientific" source of such claims. But at the time Mrs. Reisman didn't know anything about this. She produced music videos for public television and went to work for the popular children's program *Captain Kangaroo*. Her work was well received, and soon the royalties allowed her to go back to university. She had become interested in the effect of visual images on young minds. The family had moved to Cleveland, and so she enrolled in a PhD program at Case Western Reserve.

One day a male graduate student presented a script for a pornographic video production. The professor in charge assured Mrs. Reisman that all the other students had given their consent. But she couldn't help noticing that although the female students said the images did not disturb them, "none of the sex photos got onto the videotape correctly." Denial, born of a fear of seeming unprogressive, was belied by the women's inability to do the work properly.

Mrs. Reisman began to concentrate on the impact of pornography on women and to give lectures on the subject. In 1977 she was invited to a conference in Swansea, Wales, the topic being "Love and Attraction." It turned out to be a veiled gathering of pedophiles. One of the speakers, Tom O'Carroll, the leader of the Pedophile Information Exchange, had already received much attention in Britain, having proselytized mightily on TV on behalf of sexual relations with children. The university staff went on strike

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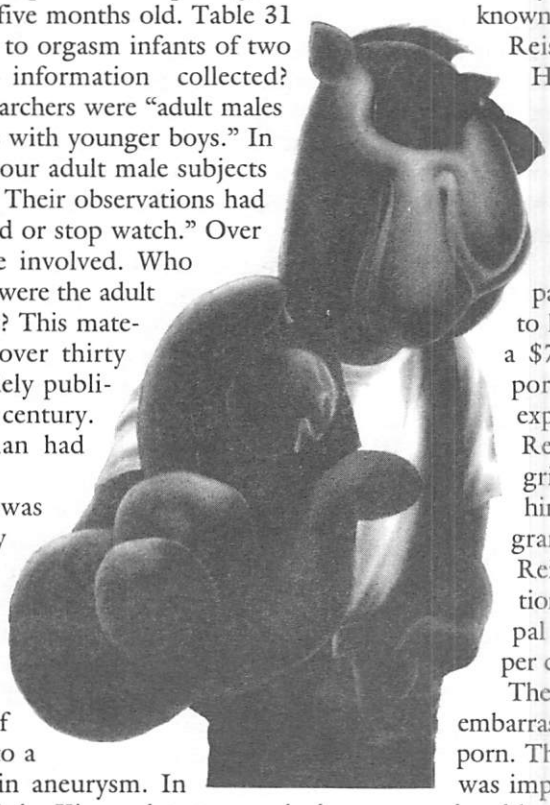
and said they wouldn't make beds or cook if he was given the podium at Swansea.

Judith Reisman's talk, illustrated with eighty slides, documented her findings of images of children in *Playboy* and *Penthouse*. It was as badly received by the professionals as the advocacy of pedophilia had been by the domestics. As she was leaving to catch the London train, a Canadian psychologist quietly took her aside. He said she was probably right that those images would cause "sexual acting out on children." But if she was looking for the cause of the child-sex-abuse epidemic, she should not neglect Edward Brecher's book, *The Sex Researcher*. Particularly the Kinsey chapter. He had once worked with Kinsey and Pomeroy, he said, and he made unflattering allegations about both. Alfred Kinsey, by the way, died in 1956 at the age of 62, but his co-authors, Wardell Pomeroy, Clyde Martin, and Paul Gebhard, are all still alive.

CHECKING the Kinsey report, Mrs. Reisman could hardly believe what she was seeing. Table 34 of the first volume gave "examples of multiple orgasm in pre-adolescent males," some five months old. Table 31 chronicled attempts to bring to orgasm infants of two months. How was this information collected? According to Kinsey, the researchers were "adult males who have had sexual contacts with younger boys." In fact, Kinsey added, "nine of our adult male subjects have observed such orgasm." Their observations had been "timed with second-hand or stop watch." Over three hundred children were involved. Who were these children, and who were the adult males engaged in this activity? This material had been available for over thirty years in one of the most widely publicized books of the twentieth century. No one before Mrs. Reisman had drawn attention to it.



In the late 1970s, she was offered a job in the sociology department at Haifa University. Two of her children had already moved to Israel, and so she was happy to go. Jennie by then had married a young Israeli. But at the age of 22, a year after giving birth to a daughter, she died of a brain aneurysm. In 1981, Dr. Reisman presented the Kinsey data to a packed session of the Fifth World Congress on Sexology in Jerusalem. In attendance was the "human sexuality brain-trust worldwide," she recalled. Her paper was titled: "The Scientist as a Contributing Agent to Child Sex Abuse: A Preliminary Consideration of Possible Ethics Violations."

She naïvely imagined that the world community of sex experts would react as she had. But that afternoon her assistant from the sociology department returned from lunch with the news that Judith Reisman, not Alfred Kinsey, was the target of outrage. The conference movers and shakers had roundly condemned her paper. Everyone the assistant had spoken to agreed that children could have "loving" relationships with adults. So what was the problem?

Dr. Reisman addressed the conference again two days later. This time she was interrupted by a prominent sexologist called John Money, with a Harvard PhD in psychology. He shouted to the podium that she would "set back the cause of sex education two thousand years," and he told a Swedish television interviewer that she was "Mrs. Hitler." Professor Money had founded the Gender Identity Clinic at Johns Hopkins University, where today he is professor emeritus. He has contributed to the *Journal of Paedophilia* (published in Amsterdam), and with parental consent has overseen sex-change operations on infants. Recently he has been in the news because a male subject, reconstructed as a female at eight months and injected with hormones, still ended up looking and thinking like a man. (See *Washington Post*, March 18; John Leo, *U.S. News & World Report*, March 31.) Professor Money was seeking to validate the feminist philosophy that major sex differences are not determined by genes. Such "sex reassignment" operations have been fairly common, but "the exact numbers are unknown," according to the *Washington Post*. Judith Reisman ripostes today that if she is Mrs. Hitler, then Money is Dr. Mengele.

In 1983 she appeared on *Crossfire* with Pat Buchanan and Tom Braden. Wardell Pomeroy appeared at the studio but then refused to appear before the cameras. An official at the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention at the Justice Department saw the program. He mentioned it to his boss, Al Regnery, who "signed off" on a $734,000 grant to investigate the role of pornography and media violence in sexual exploitation and in juvenile delinquency. Mr. Regnery recalled that it "caused us a lot of grief." Indeed, a great furor erupted at this hint of social regression. The recipient of the grant was the American University, and Dr. Reisman, who was given the temporary position of research professor, became the "principal investigator." She received in the end 10 per cent of the money.

The university didn't mind the money but was embarrassed to be associated with a critical look at porn. The Kinsey Institute threatened lawsuits if it was implicated by the research, and Dr. Reisman was ordered by the university to steer clear of the Kinsey reports. Congressional committees held three separate hearings on how such a grant could have been made by the Justice Department, and in the course of one hearing, Dr. Reisman for the first time met the university president, Richard Berendzen. He seemed particularly unfriendly. Their subsequent career paths suggest what strange times we live in.

In 1990 Berendzen was forced to resign as president after he was caught making obscene telephone calls from his office. One woman (of the 15 or so called) happened to be married to a policeman. The repeated phone calls were eventually traced to Berendzen's office. Among many lurid

things, he said that he had a "four-year-old 'sex slave' imprisoned in his office," and according to *Time* he discussed in "graphic detail" having sexual relations with children. He mentioned a child-pornography collection.

Richard Berendzen resigned, was admitted to the Sexual Disorders Clinic at Johns Hopkins, and kept his tenured professorship. In the following year he was the university's highest-paid professor, (receiving $261,000). In 1992 he addressed a national conference on child victimization, with particular reference to "survival techniques." By now he had "discovered" that *he* was the victim. His mother had sexually abused him when he was a child. In his book,

Smoking and Sex

ACCORDING to frequent warnings from the government health-care complex, a single unguarded act of sexual intercourse can expose a person to a deadly virus that will dismantle the body's immune system. A single cigarette, on the other hand, can do no such damage. Despite these very unequal hazards, smoking is now fiercely opposed, while sexual activity of almost any description is encouraged—usually as an aid to mental health. This happens most subversively in sex-ed classes, which President Clinton's former surgeon general, Joycelyn Elders, thought suitable for children in kindergarten.

Smoking is now viewed with the zealous moral disapproval once reserved for the ancient category of sexual deviance. Concern about souls has been transferred to the body, with moral indignation remaining a constant. Judith Reisman suggests a separate parallel: Just as the cigarette makers wanted to get the kids hooked on their product, so the sexologists want to get the kids hooked on theirs.

Is there a conflict between the rising concern about bodily health and encouragement of sexual expression? Condoms will square that circle. They "can be sexy," too, sex educators exult. And like filter-tipped cigarettes they can give a false sense of security. Condoms have a failure rate of over 15 per cent—where failure is measured by pregnancy; twice that where sexually transmitted agents are the test. But don't expect Surgeon General's warnings any time soon. Meanwhile, boatloads of condoms are being shipped to the Third World. Foreigners whom we treat with such disdain can be forgiven for thinking us morally depraved.

Those who are trying to stamp out smoking usually disapprove of sexual abstinence. Here's the latest message on sexually transmitted disease, plastered on buses in several cities earlier this year: "Abstinence Will Not Cure AIDS. Research Will." This was paid for by Amfar, a New York–based AIDS foundation which has enjoyed much socialite support.

Leading sex educators have encouraged sexual experimentation at an age that would cause tobacco executives to blanch. The leading sex-ed organization is SIECUS, the Sexual Information and Education Council of the United States. Chartered in 1964 by Dr. Mary S. Calderone, medical director of Planned Parenthood, it has promoted its agenda under the rubric of children's rights. A few years ago Dr. Calderone said that children have a fundamental right to "know about sexuality and to *be* sexual." (Her italics.) SIECUS today calls on the national media "to present sexuality as a positive aspect of the total human experience at *all stages of the life cycle*." (My italics.) Your tax dollars are at work. SIECUS boasted in 1994 that it was "one of the 24 national recipients of a new five-year cooperative agreement with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention."

Debra Haffner, SIECUS's executive director (lately she has been on sabbatical at Yale Divinity School), wrote a few years ago that "we need to tell teens that the safest sex doesn't necessarily mean no sex." Her list of pressure-relieving activities for kids included "oral sex" and "mutual masturbation." This would "help them delay the onset of sexual intercourse and its consequences." Sex educators view kids, demeaningly, as high-pressure boilers in need of socially constructed safety valves.

Recent goings-on at the Martha Winston Elementary School in Washington, D.C., suggest that the kids have learned their lessons. A fourth-grader who "challenged the authority" of a teacher was sent to an empty classroom. He coaxed several classmates into the room. According to the *Washington Times*, they "disrobed and practiced sexual acts on one another." The school's principal considered that no disciplinary steps could be taken because the sexual acts —between fourth-graders, ranging in age from 9 to 12—were "consensual."

For those parents who still don't realize what is going on, the point to grasp is that their children are viewed as prey. Perhaps the most striking feature of sex ed is its mendacity. In *Slouching towards Gomorrah* Robert Bork notes that it seems to operate "more as an incitement" than as a caution against sexual experimentation. Above all, the disparity between the little that we really need to know about intercourse and the lurid array of materials deployed by the sexolatrists should warn us of an undisclosed agenda. Those (numerous) cases in which parents have been kept in the dark about what is going on, and especially the cases in which children are not allowed to opt out of courses, should teach us the same lesson.

Some local-government posters displayed in classrooms could not possibly be shown in this magazine. In fact, the embarrassment of normal people in dealing with this subject has contributed to a broad news-media blackout about the horrible details. This has enabled the sex educators to take advantage of the very reticence that they are trying to break down. Judith Reisman's parents, old-line Communists, were shocked by the sexual revolution. But then, like Communists everywhere, they aspired to "build a new society." The sexologists have no such reconstruction in mind. Their goal—conscious or not—is merely to destroy the old. —Tom Bethell

Come Here: A Man Overcomes the Tragic Aftermath of Childhood Sexual Abuse, he describes his obscene phone calls as a form of involuntary "data gathering." Ted Koppel called the book a "genuine service to anyone who cared about the roots and consequences of child abuse." Berendzen finally became chairman of the Advisory Board for the National Center for Survivors of Child Abuse. His wife, Gail, wrote a "survivors" article for *Ladies' Home Journal*.

Dr. Reisman—who stumbled across child abuse in Kinsey's research, questioned the accuracy of Kinsey's data more generally, and then attempted to examine the adverse effects of pornography—has been vilified from coast to coast. She was run out of American University on the day her grant expired. The money was only half spent and her research was incomplete; but she was denied access to her own database, and her half-finished work was rewritten by unknown hands. For her there was no academic freedom. She appeared as an effective gladiator on a *Donahue* show (Phil Donahue, to his credit, did not stack the deck against her), and she has not been seen on the big TV shows since. *McNeil-Lehrer* taped her, but nothing appeared; Bill Moyers wrote letters—again nothing. Attacks on her appeared in *Playboy*, *Penthouse*, *Hustler*, and the *American Psychological Association Monitor*, in Jack Anderson's column, and in news stories that had all the detachment of a Herblock cartoon. Headlines had a way of imputing the prurient interest in porn to her.

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As her experience shows, tolerance is *not* the all-pervasive dogma of our day, but is specifically withdrawn from people and institutions who behave as if no revolution in sexual mores has occurred, or who obstinately question its wisdom. All the old forces of blackballing, ostracism, and disapproval, once deployed by the orthodox against heterodoxy, are now fiercely arrayed against the counter-revolutionary holdouts. The scattered remnants of orthodoxy know this and know that they will be vilified if they dare to fight. Their prudent instinct is to withdraw into private enclaves, home-school their children, and find a quiet retreat at a safe remove from crime and the federal judiciary.

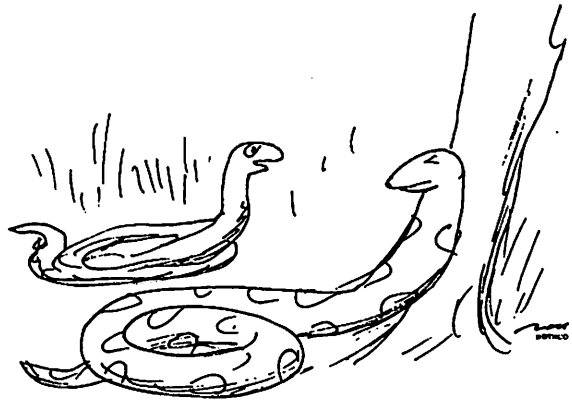
Judith Reisman, now a grandmother of nine, is still ready to stand and fight, however. Progress has been made in exposing Kinsey's deceptions, she notes. The *Washington Post*, *The Lancet*, and *Reader's Digest* have published articles about the role of pedophiles in producing some of Kinsey's data. The Family Research Council produced an effective video on the subject, and even *CBS Evening News* did a segment. There is a slow, grudging reappraisal of Kinsey's findings, his methods, and especially his badly skewed samples (1,400 of his 5,300 male subjects were imprisoned sex offenders, for example).

Kinsey's big lie—that he was a scientist, not a moralist, showing what is rather than what ought to be—has at last come under attack. Pomeroy disclosed in his 1973 book that Kinsey was engaged in an ideological mission to undermine the Judaeo-Christian ethic. In 1995, a bill was introduced calling for a congressional investigation to determine if there was "systematic sexual abuse of children" in Kinsey's research. Its main sponsor, Rep. Steve Stockman of Texas, was defeated in the 1996 election, but Rep. Peter Hoekstra of Michigan is said to be still interested.

In the United States, at least, there is no doubt that Kinsey was a more successful revolutionary than Marx or Lenin. One reason is that he didn't proclaim himself to be one. Looking back on her parents' heroes, Judith Reisman thinks that it is very difficult to instill a revolutionary outlook by encouraging young adults to go to the library and read books like *Das Kapital*. "It doesn't change you," she said. "Not in the way that having an affair can change you. That can radicalize you." Sexuality "reaches in below the belt and takes control of your emotions."

SHE does not believe that there is such a thing as impartial scientific research into sex. She has no doubt that the women's-liberation movement was and endures as a response to the betrayals of the sexual revolution. As for pornography, it "short-circuits the brain" and precludes rational thought. She is surprised that the women's movement has not produced more opponents of pornography like Andrea Dworkin and Catharine MacKinnon.

Judith Reisman's story tells us almost more than we want to know about the inequality of forces in the cultural war. In fact, the image of war is itself misleading. "War implies two opposing armies," Dr. Reisman says. In reality there is only one. The sexual revolution has resembled an incoming tide more than a war. Nothing seems able to resist it, and we can only hope that one day it will turn and move back out to sea. The cultural wreckage left behind will be considerable. Meanwhile the laws have been changed, good habits undermined, the string untuned.



"Not the serpent in the garden?"

"How can we have been so blind?" Dr. Reisman used to hear her family and friends say when she was young, referring to the Holocaust. "But look at us," she says. "People cannot identify their enemies." Still, she has not lost the gift of optimism. "This country is blessed," she says. "Change is possible. We are supposed to stand up and be counted. Beyond that, it is in God's hands." □