Lehmiller has written an impressive, up-to-date coverage of human sexuality. Well-researched and beautifully written, it surveys the vast and tangled realm of human sexual behavior with gentle respect and insight. Everyone will learn something new from this book and come away impressed with a new appreciation of this vital domain of human social life.

Roy Baumeister, Francis Eppes Professor of Psychology at Florida State University and author of The Cultural Animal: Human Nature, Meaning, and Social Life

Going both wide and deep, Lehmiller has produced a singular feat of scholarship that will not only get students and teachers talking about sex, but will inspire conversations about human sexuality that are informed, accurate, lively and respectful.

Ian Kerner, sexuality counselor and New York Times best-selling author of She Comes First

The Psychology of Human Sexuality is a comprehensive, progressive, and in-depth research-based examination of human sexuality, covering both depth and breadth of contemporary issues in human sexuality. It would be an ideal text for a course for psychology students looking to gain a broad understanding of the field of human sexuality.

Professor Kristen F. Mark, Director of the Sexual Health Promotion Lab, University of Kentucky, USA

The Psychology of Human Sexuality offers a comprehensive overview of the science behind human sexual behavior from a biopsychosocial perspective. By emphasizing psychological research and theory on human sexuality, renowned sexuality expert Justin J. Lehmiller reveals the psychological importance of possessing familiarity with one’s body for forming healthy sexual relationships, and shows how a lack of such knowledge can lead to sexual and relationship difficulties.

A wide variety of issues and topics are explored, ranging from sexual anatomy, research methods, attraction, orientation, relationships, and behaviors, to sexual difficulties and solutions, prostitution, and pornography. Designed to be inclusive and respectful of a diverse audience, Lehmiller’s analysis also includes instructor resources designed to facilitate a dynamic and interactive classroom environment and enhance critical thinking. Approaching the topic with a combination of sensitivity and scholarly rigor, The Psychology of Human Sexuality offers rich insights into the latest theories and research that shape our understanding of the psychological aspects of human sexuality.

Instructor materials available online at www.wiley.com/go/lehmiller

Justin J. Lehmiller is a College Fellow in the Department of Psychology at Harvard University. He has published over 25 articles and book chapters in such publications as the Journal of Sex Research and the Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, and he is frequently interviewed by news and media outlets.
The Psychology of Human Sexuality
## Contents

*About the Author*  xi  
*Foreplay*  xii  
*Illustrations*  xiv  
*Text Boxes*  xx  
*Tables*  xxii  

### 1 Theoretical Perspectives on Human Sexuality  1  
**Introduction**  2  
What Drives Us to Have Sex?  2  
  *Psychological Influences*  2  
  *Cultural and Societal Influences*  3  
  *Biological and Evolutionary Influences*  7  
Major Theoretical Perspectives on Human Sexuality  8  
  *Psychoanalytic Theory*  8  
  *Cognitive-Behavioral and Learning Theories*  11  
  *Exchange Theories*  15  
  *Personality Theories*  16  
  *Evolutionary Theory*  19  
The Perspective of This Text  21  
Key Terms  23  
Discussion Questions  23  
References  23

### 2 Sexology Research: History, Methods, and Ethics  27  
**Introduction**  28  
A Brief History of Sexology  29  
Sexology as a Science  31  
Sample Selection  32  
Nonexperimental Research  34  
  *Surveys*  34  
  *Direct Observation*  38
3 Human Sexual Anatomy

Introduction 56
Male Sexual Anatomy 56
A Historical and Cultural Overview of the Penis 56
External Anatomy 58
Internal Anatomy 59
Psychology of the Penis: Male Genital Concerns 64
Male Genital Health Issues 66
Female Sexual Anatomy 67
A Historical and Cultural Overview of the Vulva 67
External Anatomy 68
Internal Anatomy 73
Breasts 75
Psychology of the Breasts and Vulva: Female Bodily Concerns 77
Female Breast and Genital Health Issues 79
Moving Forward 82
Key Terms 82
Discussion Questions 83
References 83

4 Human Sexual Response: Understanding Arousal and Orgasm 87
Introduction 88
Factors That Influence Sexual Arousal 88
The Brain 88
The Senses 90
Hormones 97
Substances 100
The Sexual Response Cycle 103
The Masters and Johnson Model 103
Psychological Models of Sexual Response 108
Key Terms 111
5 Gender and Gender Identity

Introduction
Biological Influences on Gender Identity and Sexuality
  Biological Sex Variations
Psychosocial Influences on Gender Identity and Sexuality
  Social Interactions and Norms
  Physical Environments
  Media
Variations in Gender Expression
  Transsexualism
  Cross-Dressing
  Other Identities
Just How Different Are Men and Women?
  Sex Differences in Psychology
  Sex Differences in Sexuality and Attitudes Toward Sex
Key Terms
Discussion Questions
References

6 Sexual Orientation

Introduction
Sexual Orientation: Definitions and Types
Measurement and Prevalence
Theories of Sexual Orientation
  Early Psychological Theories
  Biological and Hormonal Theories
  Evolutionary Theories
  Biopsychosocial Theories
Sex Differences in the Expression of Sexual Orientation
Sexual Orientation Attitudes
  Prejudice Against Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Persons
  Sexual Orientation in Psychological Perspective
Sexual Orientation Myths
Key Terms
Discussion Questions
References

7 The Laws of Attraction

Introduction
What Attracts Us To Other People?
  Affective Influences
  Propinquity
  Similarity
  Scarcity
  Physiological Arousal
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>10</th>
<th>Sex Education, Contraception, and Pregnancy</th>
<th>255</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>256</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sex Education</td>
<td>256</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Contraception</td>
<td>261</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>History</td>
<td>262</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Types of Contraceptives</td>
<td>262</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Choosing the Right Contraceptive</td>
<td>270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pregnancy</td>
<td>272</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Psychology of Trying to Have a Baby</td>
<td>272</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Psychological Changes During Pregnancy and After Birth</td>
<td>273</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Abortion</td>
<td>274</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Key Terms</td>
<td>275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Discussion Questions</td>
<td>275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>References</td>
<td>276</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>11</th>
<th>Sexually Transmitted Infections and Safer-Sex Practices</th>
<th>279</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sexually Transmitted Infections</td>
<td>280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bacterial Infections</td>
<td>281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Viral Infections</td>
<td>284</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other Infections</td>
<td>289</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Factors That Increase the Spread of STIs</td>
<td>290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Biological</td>
<td>290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Psychological</td>
<td>291</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social and Environmental</td>
<td>292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Psychological Impact of STIs</td>
<td>293</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Implications for Romantic and Sexual Relationships</td>
<td>295</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Preventing Infection</td>
<td>296</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Key Terms</td>
<td>299</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Discussion Questions</td>
<td>299</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>References</td>
<td>299</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>12</th>
<th>Sexual Dysfunction and Sex Therapy</th>
<th>302</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>303</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Causes of Sex Difficulties</td>
<td>303</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Biological</td>
<td>303</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Psychological</td>
<td>304</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social</td>
<td>306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Types of Sexual Dysfunction</td>
<td>308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Desire Problems</td>
<td>308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Arousal Problems</td>
<td>311</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Orgasm Problems</td>
<td>311</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pain Disorders</td>
<td>312</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sex Therapy</td>
<td>313</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Schools of Thought</td>
<td>313</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
13 Variations in Sexual Behavior 328

Introduction 329
What are Paraphilias? 329
Types of Paraphilias 331
Fetishism 331
Transvestism 335
Sadomasochism 336
Voyeurism 338
Exhibitionism 339
Pedophilia 341
Other Paraphilias 341
Treatment of Paraphilic Disorders 345
Medical Therapies 346
Psychological Therapies 346
Social Skills Training 347
Effectiveness 347
Key Terms 348
Discussion Questions 348
References 348

14 Sex Laws, Sexual Victimization, and the Sexual Marketplace 351

Introduction 352
A Brief History of Sex Laws 352
Sexual Coercion and Violence 354
Sexual Assault 354
Child Sexual Abuse 357
Sexual Harassment 358
The Sexual Marketplace 360
Prostitution 360
Sex Trafficking 364
Pornography 365
Key Terms 374
Discussion Questions 374
References 374

Epilogue 378
Glossary 379
Index 391
Justin J. Lehmiller (PhD, Purdue University) is a College Fellow in the Department of Psychology at Harvard University. He has been teaching college-level human sexuality courses for more than 8 years and is an accomplished educator. As a graduate student at Purdue, he received an award for outstanding teaching and, since serving on the faculty at Harvard, was awarded a Certificate of Teaching Excellence.

Dr. Lehmiller is also a prolific scholar, having published more than 25 pieces of scientific writing to date, including articles in some of the leading journals on sex and relationships, such as the *Journal of Sex Research* and the *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*. He conducts research on topics including secret relationships, prejudice and stigma, sexual orientation, safer-sex practices, and friends with benefits. Dr. Lehmiller’s credentials have made him an internationally recognized expert on sexuality. He is frequently interviewed by and has his research highlighted in news and media outlets, including CNN.com, *The Chicago Tribune*, *The Huffington Post*, *Men’s Health*, and *The Sunday Times*. He writes a popular blog, *The Psychology of Human Sexuality*, that is updated several times per week and presents the latest research on sex and relationships in a way that is both educational and entertaining. Learn more about Dr. Lehmiller and follow his blog at www.lehmiller.com.
Sex. Almost everyone does it, but almost no one wants to talk about. It is quite the paradox when you consider how vital sex is to human life. Not only is it the act that propels our species forward, but it is also a way to bond with a romantic partner, a way to relieve the stress of daily life, not to mention an enjoyable way to pass the time. Of course, sex is not fun and games all of the time. For some people, sex can be a constant source of anxiety and insecurity, an awkward and embarrassing topic of discussion, not to mention a potential pathway to disease and death. Sex thus has both a light side and a dark side, and each deserves to be acknowledged.

The goal of this book is to give you a better understanding of the ins and outs of sex from a psychological perspective. There are many excellent books out there already that tackle this topic from a largely biological standpoint, and you could certainly learn a lot from reading those texts. However, most of those books give short shrift to the roles that psychology and the social and cultural context play in shaping human sexual behavior. I have used many of these books in previous courses I have taught and have found that students who were majoring in psychology or who took the course because it was advertised as Psychology of Human Sexuality were largely unsatisfied. In fact, the first few times I taught this class, my end-of-semester evaluations looked pretty similar: students commented on how much they loved and enjoyed the course, but wanted to know, "Where's the psychology?" Because I was unable to find a book that truly met the needs and desires of my students, I decided to write this one.

Of course, this book will not focus on psychology to the total exclusion of other factors, because that would ultimately do a disservice to readers by providing an utterly imbalanced perspective. I have therefore sought to put psychology front and center throughout, but also to give due consideration to biological, evolutionary, and sociocultural influences on sexuality where relevant. As some of you may recognize, this book mirrors the biopsychosocial perspective adopted in most health psychology textbooks.

When it comes to teaching a sexuality course, my philosophy is to be sex-positive. I have heard people define sex-positive in many different ways, but my personal definition involves: (1) adopting comprehensive and inclusive definitions of gender and sexual orientation, (2) rejecting narrow definitions about what constitutes sex (e.g., the view that only vaginal intercourse "counts"), (3) giving due consideration to the potential positive and negative consequences of being sexually active, (4) providing students with the information and tools they need to optimize their sexual
health and to make healthy decisions, (5) promoting healthy and respectful sexual and romantic relationships, (6) recognizing that monogamy and marriage are not universal relationship goals and ideals, (7) understanding that not everyone is a sexual being and that a lack of sexual desire is not inherently dysfunctional, and (8) respecting people who have different views about sex. I kept this philosophy in mind when writing this book with the goal of making it as inclusive and respectful as possible for a diverse audience.

After reading this book, my hope is that you will have a better understanding of and appreciation for the amazing complexity of human sexuality, as well as the incredible variation that exists in sexual perspectives and behaviors. The ultimate goal is to enhance your psychological training and for you to be able to think and communicate about sex at a much deeper level in your everyday life, in both casual conversations and interactions with sexual and/or romantic partners.

Now let’s talk about sex.