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Box 5, Folder 5, "Sexual Revolution" - *Playboy* interviews
including Marc H. Tanenbaum, 1986.

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THE PLAYBOY PHILOSOPHY

*the nineteenth part of a statement in which playboy's editor-publisher spells out—
for friends and critics alike—our guiding principles and editorial credo*

IN ANY SERIOUS ANALYSIS of the sexual ills of society, it is necessary to consider the historical link between sex and religion. For, as the late Dr. Alfred C. Kinsey observed, "There is nothing in the English-American social structure which has had more influence upon present-day patterns of sexual behavior than the religious backgrounds of that culture."

Some of the comments and conclusions in previous installments of this editorial series have prompted an occasional casual reader to protest that *The Playboy Philosophy* is opposed to the basic Judaeo-Christian heritage of America, although a considered evaluation of our views would confirm that we have consistently directed our criticism, not at organized religion per se, but at the antisexual element within it.

It would be a mistake to think of *The Playboy Philosophy*—or the American Sexual Revolution, to which we have devoted so much attention—as reflections of a conflict between the secular and religious interests in society; for an increasing number of the clergy of various denominations are expressing concern over that part of our religious heritage that has, for centuries, emphasized sex primarily as sin and, in the most extreme form of Puritanism that has so influenced our Anglo-American culture, has opposed almost every kind of pleasure as immoral and against the will of God.

A great deal has been written about the moral transition taking place in America; what has been mentioned less often is the related social and sexual revolution that is occurring within organized religion itself. Instead of simply damning this trend toward a more permissive society—in the absolutist "thou shalt not" tradition of the past—many contemporary churchmen are beginning to analyze the realities of human sexual behavior and religion's role related to them, in the light of new knowledge supplied by recent philosophical and psychoanalytical insights.

As a result, while some reject *The Playboy Philosophy* as "immoral," "irreligious" and "unGodly," our lay evaluations of the modern moral milieu are welcomed in many ecclesiastical circles; and some of the most positive, perceptive, and certainly most welcome re-

editorial By Hugh M. Hefner

sponses to our writings have come from clergymen.

As indication of such interest, we have been invited to lecture at several religious institutions, seminars and meetings; *The Playboy Philosophy* has also been the subject and source material for a number of religious debates, study groups and even sermons—some critical, but many of them favorably inclined toward much of what we have had to say.

A few months ago, we accepted an invitation to participate in a religious round table that was broadcast over radio station WINS in New York. The program is a weekly, Sunday-evening series entitled *Dialogue*, in which a Roman Catholic priest, a Protestant minister and a Jewish rabbi discuss and debate various subjects of significance and interest to society. The panel proposed to devote four separate, hourlong sessions to "*The Playboy Philosophy*" and "The American Sexual Revolution"—subjects with which we are certainly well acquainted and about which we were pleased to express opinions.

We found this opportunity to exchange points of view with distinguished representatives of America's three major religious faiths a unique and unusually stimulating experience, and the response to the programs prompted WINS to rebroadcast the entire four-week series again this fall. Because of the religious implications in so much of what we have been writing in the *Philosophy*, we believe our readers will be interested in the various viewpoints expressed; so much so that we are devoting the December and January installments, in these special Holiday Issues, to an edited transcript of the interchange.

Our fellow panelists were Father Norman J. O'Connor, Roman Catholic priest, well known for his interest in and association with jazz, for many years the chaplain to Boston University, currently Director of Radio and TV Communications and Films for the Paulist Fathers in New York City; Reverend Richard E. Gary, Episcopal minister, graduate of Yale Divinity School, since 1956 the minister to St. Mary's Church in Manhattan-

ville, highly regarded for his social work as a member of the Department of Christian Social Relations of the Episcopal Diocese of New York; Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum, widely published and influential Jewish leader, with a master's degree in Hebrew Literature from the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, formerly Executive Director of the Synagogue Council of America, currently Director of The American Jewish Committee's Interreligious Affairs Department; and Murray Burnett, moderator of these round-table discussions and our host.

THE SEXUAL REVOLUTION

BURNETT: Good evening. The program is *Dialogue* and I am Murray Burnett, your host. *Dialogue* attempts to bring to bear upon the leading issues of our times the thinking and wisdom of men trained to deal with our deepest needs. They will talk about these things that are truly important to all of us. The program is presented by the Public Affairs Department of WINS, in cooperation with the Archdiocese of New York, The American Jewish Committee and The Protestant Council of the City of New York. I would like you to meet tonight's panel. They are: Father Norman J. O'Connor, Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum, Reverend Richard Gary and Mr. Hugh M. Hefner—and, of course, it is hardly necessary to say that Mr. Hefner is the Editor-Publisher of *PLAYBOY* magazine and president of the Playboy Clubs and the whole Playboy empire.

All right. This evening we are going to talk about an apparent revolution that is taking place in America. A revolution in the area of sexual mores and attitudes. The mores are changing—for better or worse, depending on one's point of view—toward sexual behavior, knowledge of sex and dissemination of information about sex. And in *PLAYBOY* magazine, Hugh Hefner has been writing *The Playboy Philosophy*, which deals very strongly with this sexual revolution. Now, let me start things off tonight with a question about the statement I have just made: In your opinion, gentlemen, are we involved in a sexual revolution?

O'CONNOR: Let me take the first crack 91



O'CONNOR: *But where is this taking us? What significance does this so-called sexual revolution have? Will it be lasting, or is it just a cultural fad that will change in the next ten or twelve years?*



TANENBAUM: *I think everything that relates to the sexual life in America is going through this transitional stage. All of our traditional perceptions are undergoing a radical re-examination.*



GARY: *I feel we've been caricaturing PLAYBOY a little. But I also felt, in doing my homework for this discussion—reading your "Philosophy"—that you were caricaturing religion a little.*



HEFNER: *What I have written in "The Playboy Philosophy" is an expression of my own quite deeply felt beliefs; and I held most of them several years before I ever thought of starting PLAYBOY.*

at that. I think, first of all, there has been an immense amount of discussion about it. I notice the Rabbi is scanning a piece in a recent issue of *Time* magazine called "The Second Sexual Revolution." I think there are a tremendous number of publications which we now see on the newsstands that are addressing themselves in some fashion or another to the problems of, or some aspect of, the sexual world. There has been a great deal written about the college girl and sex . . . I've forgotten the title of the book . . .

BURNETT: It is called *Sex and the Single Girl* . . . or maybe you're thinking of *Sex and the College Girl* . . .

O'CONNOR: It is *Sex and the College Girl*, I believe . . .

BURNETT: Albert Ellis has now written a book called *Sex and the Single Man* and I'm thinking of writing one entitled *Sex and the Mass Media*.

O'CONNOR: Well, I wonder if what we're facing isn't so much a revolution as a kind of re-examination. A revolution, to me, means a complete change, an overthrow, an entirely new way of doing things. I think we ought to keep in mind that down through the long years of history, the sexual standards of the Western world have swung from one extreme to the other—from a very puritanistic view to a very lax and lackadaisical view, if you want to use those expressions. And in our own present moment, what we are probably doing is re-examining something which the Western world has not really spent too much time on in the past. As a consequence, what we have is not a revolution, but a good reconsideration or review of it.

TANENBAUM: There is, without question, a much greater openness now, on a subject that has previously been taboo or prohibited. But we are presently undergoing a number of very profound self-examinations—on many aspects of our total life and our total situation—brought on by the new conditions in which we live. We are re-examining the sources of our religious community, of our political life, of our economic life—the whole world in which we live is being subjected to radical re-examination—so it comes as no surprise, to me at least, that we are re-examining, in a very basic way, this most profound feature of man's survival and his happiness.

BURNETT: But, Rabbi, you . . .

TANENBAUM: What I'm getting at is that there have been almost polarized ways of looking at the sexual life of Western mankind in the past. There was the pagan outlook, which prevailed up until the Third and Fourth Centuries, in which man felt very close to his natural impulses and indulged himself according to his appetite; and then, I think in reaction to that, there was the whole Pauline-Augustinian view of deni-

al and retreat from sexual life. Much of what we have inherited in the Western world represents a constant tension between these two views.

In our own time, I think it has been primarily a puritanical view—particularly in America. And now we have a reaction against the basic assumptions of the whole Puritan experience—as reflected in the Protestant mores, by and large, of this country. These mores are now being subjected to profound examination.

BURNETT: Reverend Gary came alive when you mentioned Protestant mores; and Hugh Hefner is waiting to express an opinion . . .

GARY: Well, I would like to get our guest into this at a fairly early point. And my question has to do with the connection between our presently affluent society and the emergence of new freedom in sexual relations. I wonder if there isn't a connection between our interest in what we call the finer things of life—new acquisitions, new luxuries, new leisure time, all this sort of thing—and our interest in sexual freedom. Does that make any sense?

HEFNER: Yes, I think it does. It seems to me there's a definite connection, and that they are all associated, in one way or another, with an increasing concern over—and searching for—personal identity. I'd like to say, incidentally, that I agree with what has just been expressed; and with something additional that is implied, I think, but has not been so clearly stated: Whatever we call it—sexual revolution or re-examination of our sexual mores—society is in a state of significant sexual transition; but it is less a change in behavior—though there may be a little of that, too—than a change in attitudes toward the behavior. It is, it seems to me, a rejection of our Puritan past, as was suggested by Rabbi Tanenbaum; a transition from guilt, shame and hypocrisy to a new honesty, a new permissiveness, a new willingness to talk about sex in a frank and open way—a freedom to examine, to express, to enjoy . . .

O'CONNOR: Let me ask you a question. You mention a new honesty and openness in talking about sex, but I wonder if this is the actual situation, if this is really true. I am a part of a generation that grew up in what you call [in *The Playboy Philosophy*] "The Age of the Common Man," with which I thoroughly disagree—but, in any case, this was the late 1930s and everybody was advocating proper sex education in the home. What was supposed to happen was that parents were going to tell their children all about sex within an atmosphere of the family—the facts about sex, and the proper purpose of sex, and the real philosophy of sex was to come out of all this. Well, now we have reached a stage in society where sex is a very prominent factor in American life; but I find

that, in general, few parents ever got around to this sex education in the home—even though the home may have, prominently displayed on the cocktail table, “The Second Sexual Revolution,” under “Modern Living,” in *Time* magazine; may have copies of *PLAYBOY*; may have copies of *McCall's*, and other magazines with articles about sexual problems in them. With all of the attention sex is receiving in publications today, I wonder—in your experience, and in the experience of the rest of you, as well—whether it isn't still a subject that fails to receive proper attention in the home. I wonder whether this continuing dialog about sex that is going on in the mass media isn't way beyond what exists within the average American family.

HEFNER: Quite possibly. But to whatever extent this is true today, it is a reflection of the sexual sham and shame of a generation ago. I would certainly disagree with any suggestion that the late 1930s was a period of sexual enlightenment in America; there may have been some interest expressed in sex education, but it was minimal, for the Thirties was a time of extreme antisexuality. A 1937 issue of *Life* magazine was banned in a number of communities across the country, because it included an innocuous article about childbirth; the debate over sex education in the Thirties concerned the propriety of telling children they weren't delivered by the stork.

The roots of this sexual revolution we've been talking about may go back several decades, but the period of real transition has just begun. For that reason, there is a remarkable difference in the sexual outlook of two generations born little more than 20 years apart. If there is a lack of communication on the subject of sex within the home, as you suggest, I think we would agree that it is the fault of the parents, not the children; the problem persists to the extent that these parents, being of that older generation, still suffer from the sexual suppression of their own childhood. For the results you're looking for—any real improvement in the interpersonal relationships between parents and children—we'll have to wait another generation, until the children of today have become the parents.

BURNETT: Hugh, how are the attitudes of today so very different from a generation ago? A little earlier Father O'Connor mentioned the book *Sex and the College Girl*. I've read it, and I didn't find much difference between what was said in that book and what I remember about my days in college. And they go back a little.

HEFNER: If I understand you correctly, you're saying you didn't find much difference in terms of the behavior that was reported?

BURNETT: Or the talk that goes on.

HEFNER: Well, the talk and the behav-

ior are two very different things. The human nature of man—and, consequently, his actual sex behavior—changes much less than society's attitudes toward the behavior, not only generation by generation, but century by century. And talk—or communication of any kind—is less a reflection of what men do than what they think about what they do.

This confusion between activity and attitude sometimes prompts the suggestion that there really is no sexual revolution taking place in America today, because people have always known about sex; and they are doing pretty much the same things today as they did yesterday. Yes, they probably are; what is changing is society's attitude toward what they are doing, accompanied by a new willingness to accept sex in conversation, humor, books, films—in all the areas of personal and general communication.

The new morality is especially obvious in some of society's most popular forms of mass communication: in the books that we banned as obscene a decade ago, that are today best sellers; in the unprecedented sexual frankness of our current cinema; in the subjects regularly discussed and dramatized on television that would never have been permitted on pre-TV radio.

BURNETT: You're absolutely right.

SEX AND ANTISEX

O'CONNOR: But where is this taking us? What significance does this so-called sexual revolution have? Will it be lasting or is it just a cultural fad that will change within the next ten or twelve years?

HEFNER: I think it will last. I think . . .

TANENBAUM: Before we ask Mr. Hefner to explore that question, though, I wonder whether we shouldn't clarify what I think is a contradiction in our discussion. We're saying that human nature persists; that is, that practices remain the same. So what we're doing is simply talking about them more, and presumably finding greater freedom of expression. But I wonder if this is really true. One of the reasons for the greater awareness about such things is, I think, that we're troubled by them; we have problems; and the problems are, in some ways, quite different from what they've been in the past.

BURNETT: What problems?!

TANENBAUM: Well, for example, sex is not unrelated to the problem of family life; nor is it unrelated to the emergence of a teenage culture, which is very self-conscious sexually. Now aren't there changes in patterns, for example, in the lives of our teenage children: the insistence with which some parents push their children prematurely into adulthood; the often erotic, quite compulsory patterns that are imposed upon adolescents, with early dating, champagne parties, dressing little girls in adult clothes

and make-up, so they seem more sexually attractive? Then there is the greater rate of divorce in this country, which is very often related to problems of adultery and extramarital sexual relations. Now, things are either different from what they were in the past, and we are concerned about that difference, and are trying to define that difference in order to understand it and come to grips with it; or else we are simply saying that the only thing happening is a focusing of greater attention on such matters, because we have more mass media covering these subjects than ever before and more leisure time available to consider them. I don't think the latter is the case.

BURNETT: Mr. Hefner didn't say that.

TANENBAUM: I didn't say that *he* did, but there is an area of possible confusion here, I think, and some clarification might be helpful before going further.

BURNETT: I thought he made a very good point. In response to my request for some evidence of a change in society's attitude toward sex, he mentioned our mass media: A discussion like the one we are having here this evening, for example, would probably not have been allowed on the air 20 years ago; a magazine similar to *PLAYBOY* would not have been permitted on the newsstands; *Ulysses* was banned. He made this point and, I think, he made it clearly and correctly.

HEFNER: I think, however, the Rabbi has introduced some interesting new questions that deserve attention.

O'CONNOR: But before we get to that, may I ask a question, Marc? I'm wondering, is sex a reflection of the problem, or is sex the problem? So that, for instance, when the parent is worried about the significance of the Beatles in his teenage child's life—and I find that the “teenager” in this particular instance is eight or nine years old . . . (*Laughter*)

And isn't *PLAYBOY* occupying somewhat the same relationship? The concern is that sex has become an outlet for a tremendous amount of inner frustration, and irritation, and annoyance, and tiredness, and feelings of inadequacy in society; and, therefore, we are now talking about this more and more . . .

BURNETT: And enjoying it less and less?

O'CONNOR: Which is another part of the problem, too. But there's the talk about sex, without the facing of the problem inside.

TANENBAUM: Well, let's let Mr. Hefner answer this, because I've been impressed by the number of things that he's written about this, in what I consider to be a very serious examination. What's your reaction, Mr. Hefner?

HEFNER: I would agree with what I think Father O'Connor is suggesting here—that whatever problems we face in society today, and they are certainly multiple—sex, and this new examination

of, and emphasis upon, sex, is not a cause, but an effect; I would also agree that sex is often misused by emotionally disturbed members of society, who are unwilling, or unable, to come to grips with other inner stresses and frustrations.

I do not believe, however, that a more sexually permissive society—and *PLAYBOY*, to whatever extent it assists in the trend toward greater sexual freedom—adds to these problems. Just the opposite; for it is not sexuality, but anti-sexuality, that causes greater frustration and suffering. If sex, and the more positive attitude expressed in *PLAYBOY* regarding sex, can—as Father O'Connor says—create an outlet for a tremendous amount of inner frustration, irritation and feelings of inadequacy, then this is just one step in the right direction. I can only see it as a help, rather than a hindrance.

I'd like to take a moment to clarify, if I may, the apparent cause of confusion referred to a minute ago by Rabbi Tanenbaum. When I said that nature persists, while custom changes, and contrasted behavior and attitude, I assumed it was understood that I was referring, simply and solely, to sex behavior—not the secondary patterns of social behavior that may be associated with courtship, and differ from culture to culture, but the relatively constant activity itself, that Dr. Kinsey and his associates have turned into statistics for their reports.

As both Rabbi Tanenbaum and Father O'Connor pointed out at the beginning of this discussion, Western society's attitude toward sex has varied widely through the centuries; my point was simply that man's actual sex behavior has not had the same tendency to fluctuate, because it is linked to an innate physical drive. This is not to suggest that social traditions and taboos cannot significantly affect personal sex behavior; we all recognize that they can and do. But it is precisely because what is involved here is an attempt to control a natural instinct, that excessive sex suppression wreaks such havoc. If you suppress one form of sexual release, because custom considers it socially undesirable, man's innate sexuality will express itself in another, frequently far less desirable, form. The notion that the raw sex drive can be sublimated through an aesthetic interest in the arts, literature or some similar form of creativity is as absurd as a suggestion that we might do away with hunger or thirst in a similar way. The problem will not disappear; it must be dealt with. And hopefully, in the future, it will be dealt with rationally, with compassion and insight.

The point I was making earlier, relative to all of this, is that the present situation is the same as in centuries past: The sexual revolution represents less of a change in behavior than a change in society's attitude about the behavior. And

there is, incidentally, actual scientific evidence to support such a conclusion.

One of the more interesting results of the Kinsey studies was a comparison of the sexual behavior of men and women born in each of the decades since the turn of the century. The statistics were consistently similar and in many instances almost identical, for members of the same sex, and the same social and educational level, whether they were born before 1900, between 1900 and 1910, 1910 and 1920, and so on. In contrast to this relatively constant *personal* moral behavior, we would all agree, I'm sure, that in the last half century the United States has undergone a remarkable change in *public* morality.

I agree with the concern Rabbi Tanenbaum expresses over false teenage values, the marital unhappiness that has led to a significant increase in divorce, and the numerous similar problems of identity and adjustment that are so much a part of our society of the Sixties. Once again, however, I do not believe that we tend to increase such social ills through our quest for a new morality based upon honesty, understanding and reason rather than hypocrisy, superstition and ignorance.

As society becomes continually more complex, more automated, more impersonal, more conformist, there is increasing reason for concern over the loss of personal identity that people have inevitably suffered. If this trend is to be offset in the future—and it must be, if we are to survive as a free society—it will require a tremendous emphasis on the importance of the individual and on those things that give a person a sense of identity and individuality. Sex is one of the important ways in which such personal identity is established.

PLAYBOY AND THE NEW LEISURE

O'CONNOR: I would like to ask you, Hugh, in terms of this, what do you feel is your contribution with *PLAYBOY* magazine?

HEFNER: This may take me back a bit to the question Reverend Gary originally asked—about the association between sexual freedom and the affluent society—that I didn't have the opportunity to answer fully.

PLAYBOY was originally conceived as a magazine of entertainment for the urban man. Part of that entertainment exists within the pages of the publication itself—the fiction, articles, cartoons, humor and pictorial features that are simply there to be enjoyed; and not infrequently, with our nonfiction, to edify and provoke thought, too. The other part of our emphasis on entertainment is to be found in the service articles, features and columns devoted to the pleasures of leisure-time activity and the accouterments, the accessories that are a part of good and gracious living.

PLAYBOY was not planned as a publica-

tion for the idle rich, so much as in recognition that with the prosperity of post-War America, almost everyone could have a piece of what we described as *the playboy life*—if he were willing to expend the necessary effort. In this sense, from the very beginning, we were giving the word "playboy" a new and broader meaning than it had had in the past.

We explained what we meant by a *playboy* in one of our earliest issues: He isn't a wastrel or a ne'er-do-well; he might be a successful business executive, a man in the arts, a college professor, an architect or an engineer. What sets him apart is his *point of view*. He must see life not as a vale of tears, but as a happy time; he must find pleasure in his work, without regarding it as the end and all of living; he should be an alert man, an aware man, a man of taste, a man sensitive to pleasure, who—without acquiring the stigma of the voluptuary or the dilettante—can live life to the hilt. That, we said, is the sort of man we mean when we use the word *playboy*.

I consider this an extremely positive statement—positive for the individual and for society, as well.

For the individual, it is all very much tied into the problem of identity that was mentioned before. Man has traditionally found an important part of his ego gratification and identification in his work; but in our increasingly mechanized civilization, many jobs have become so repetitious and impersonal that they no longer serve this end. Increasingly, establishing the individual's image in society, and his sense of self, will become the function of our avocations, as well as our vocations, I think, because more and more people's work will cease to serve as a satisfactory source of identity, and the ways in which we earn our livings will require far less time in the coming era of almost total automation.

We all recognize, I'm sure, how all-important a satisfactory sense of identity is to the psychological well-being of the individual; and so the ways in which a man spends the leisure, or nonworking, part of his life are going to have an importance in the future that they have never had before. They may well mean the difference between our continuing to enjoy life as individuals in a free society or turning into a nation of automatons, as unthinking, impassive, imitative and mechanical as the machines we have built to serve us.

PLAYBOY's editorial emphasis on the pleasures of leisure living can thus be seen as serving a decidedly worthwhile end, I think. And society benefits additionally by our emphasis on the advantages of free enterprise, the coverage given to the creature comforts and good life that are available to a majority in

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PLAYBOY PHILOSOPHY (continued from page 94)

our middle-class economy, if they are willing to expend the effort to attain them.

BURNETT: How does PLAYBOY do that?
HEFNER: All of the magazine's service features—on subjects such as male fashion, food and drink, sports cars, hi-fi, travel, and the rest—in fact, PLAYBOY's entire editorial personality and point of view, stress the positive aspects of affluence and serve as a motivation to try and achieve these things.

PLAYBOY AND SEX

TANENBAUM: Hugh, what kind of criticism do you get of PLAYBOY?

HEFNER: Well, it's changed a bit over the years. It began as a rather simply stated criticism of *content*, directed primarily at our photographs of women; more recently, it has become a more complex criticism of *concept*—the very thing that I've just been talking about. At the heart of it, though, it all comes from the same source, I think. The opposition to PLAYBOY is prompted by the significant element of puritanism that still exists in the United States. PLAYBOY offends some people, and makes others uneasy, because they still think of sex as something either so sacred or so profane that it has to be hidden away in a dark room; they object to sex being frankly depicted or described in public.

Actually, though I didn't fully realize it in the beginning, PLAYBOY is editorially interested in precisely those aspects of life that the Puritan was most against: sex, first and foremost, of course. But also our more general emphasis on pleasure and play; as well as the notion that the accumulation of material possessions

can be a positive addition to the other interests in life.

In most of the criticism of PLAYBOY's concept, these elements are twisted about and misstated; the critic winds up creating a paper tiger and then slaying it. It was because of this that I originally became involved in writing *The Playboy Philosophy*, in which I attempt to spell out the principles the publication is based upon and editorially expresses; and how, in a broader sense, this is related to the whole social and sexual environment in which we exist. I was tired of reading other people's explanations of what PLAYBOY is all about. I decided that if I was going to be damned, I preferred to be damned for what I really believe than what someone else misinterprets as my beliefs.

GARY: Has it made any difference?

HEFNER: Not a great deal. The critic still tends to do battle with an imaginary adversary of his own creation. I think sometimes that it is almost a matter of picking up any stone that seems handy and tossing it in our direction, because I find that we are simultaneously criticized these days for being too sexual and also too antisexual. The idea that PLAYBOY is actually antisexual has been leveled at the magazine and at the Clubs, too . . .

TANENBAUM: What's your reaction to that? Because I've wondered about my own response, when I attended The Playboy Club at your invitation. I had a rather ambiguous reaction to what I suppose is the conception of the Club; the whole notion of the Bunnies represents, almost, a kind of sexual taboo. They are made most alluring, to incite sexual in-

terest, and at the same time they are off limits to everybody.

HEFNER: Yes, *Time* magazine made a passing reference to the Playboy Clubs recently as "brothels without a second floor." It was in their cover story, "The Second Sexual Revolution," as a matter of fact. And in an article about us in *The Saturday Evening Post* a couple of years ago, we were specifically criticized for this policy of look-but-don't-touch; the same comment has appeared in several other places since. We are quite literally criticized for the fact that The Playboy Club appears to have a sexual orientation, but we don't deliver; the implication being, presumably, that the critics would prefer it if we *did* deliver. But we know full well the sort of criticism we would get from these same sources if our rules were any different.

TANENBAUM: What if you were not sexually oriented?

HEFNER: If we were not sexually oriented, there would be no criticism. It is our positive approach to sex that distresses some people; but our society has become too sophisticated to be sympathetic with a direct attack on sexuality, so instead of attacking what really disturbs him (our sexual orientation), the critic challenges the magazine and the Clubs for being voyeuristic—for offering *unreal* sex, or a replacement for sex—when, of course, it is *real* sex and our glorification of real sex that frightens him.

This is what I meant when I said that the critic tends to toss any stone that seems available. It would be easy to condemn us if The Playboy Clubs were dens of iniquity; but since they are operated on the up-and-up, and very much in



to protest to the court."

"It is un-Catholic, un-American and a flagrant abuse of the use of the pulpit to undermine the court," he added. "Monsignor Corrigan fails to realize that the law is the law and not what his private opinion is."

Eugene M. Schloss, Jr.
Huntingdon Valley, Pennsylvania

CAMPUS POLITICS

Impressed by *The Playboy Philosophy* in the July issue, except that part expressing Hefner's bewilderment that Professor Revilo P. Oliver was not dismissed from the University of Illinois after his anti-Kennedy statement, while on the other hand Professor Leo F. Koch was shown the door for his antimorals statement. Hefner implied that a reverse decision would have been in order. I think that Hefner will agree that freedom of speech should be a universal right; in his Oliver implication, Hefner seems to be employing the same tactics his enemies use.

Richard N. Anderson
Randolph, Massachusetts

Hefner never implied that justice would have been served had Professor Oliver been dismissed and Professor Koch retained. His objection to the course of action taken by the University of Illinois was that while the university disapproved the statements of both men, Professor Oliver was granted his right to speak freely, while Professor Koch was punished by dismissal for exercising that same right. Hefner believes deeply that freedom of speech is a universal right: It was the denial of this right in Professor Koch's case with which Hefner took issue.

INDIVIDUALISM: EUROPEAN VIEW

For several years I have been an occasional reader of *PLAYBOY*, and if I have not bought the magazine each month it has been because in order to keep informed about events in divers fields I must read regularly a number of daily, weekly and monthly journals emanating from different countries. When I first saw *PLAYBOY*, I thought of it as a cheesecake magazine, and although I appreciated its attention to feminine beauty, and some of its Playmates (not all of them, since European taste in women is often different from American), it seemed something to leaf through casually. Then I was pleasantly surprised to discover *PLAYBOY*'s good taste in cuisine, men's fashions, furnishings, sports, the arts and entertainment. Obviously, the *PLAYBOY* concept of good living is not inferior to the European. In addition, I found the fiction of true literary merit,

and began to read *PLAYBOY* with respect and enjoyment.

Then Hefner began publishing *The Playboy Philosophy*, for which I must express my enthusiasm. *PLAYBOY* is no longer merely an entertainment magazine: It is becoming a medium for promulgating an art of living and a conception of existence that intelligent people in all countries will acknowledge and applaud. When we calmly admit the fact that much of human life is dominated by sex and ambition, we will have established a sound foundation for providing everyone with a maximum share of happiness on this planet. We may never perfect society, but we'll achieve more toward this end by logic and good will than by superstition, taboo, intolerance and a few dozen conflicting religious moralities. Now more than ever humanity needs liberalism, tolerance, freedom, diversity and individualism. If a person wants to be Catholic, Puritan, Hebrew, Zen Buddhist or fetishist, that's his business, but he should never attempt to force his way of living on someone else. He has a right to live, think, act and love in his own way, as long as he hurts no one else. Above all, the separation of state and church must be insisted upon.

Europeans are generally liberal and tolerant because the many differences in race, nationality, language and religion on the Continent would make life impossible if it were otherwise; humanity's two most disastrous wars, caused by intolerance, were severe lessons to Europeans. Examples of tolerance in Europe can be demonstrated by attitudes toward sex: The Latin populations are relatively uninhibited, and in France and Belgium fornication and adultery are not thought of as major crimes—which does not mean that free love is advocated, but only that scandals are rare; Germanic and Scandinavian populations are not as sex-minded, but even so, their religions do not interfere with a citizen's private affairs, and their laws reflect the proper separation of state and religion. In short, diversity is Europe's best guarantee of freedom and individuality.

As seen from Europe, the United States is very restrictive. When we read about Little Rock, or about an American woman obliged to fly to Sweden (under public reprobation) for a necessary abortion, or about the intentions of Senator Goldwater, we Europeans think: Americans live more and more like robots. In their lives there's little place left for individualism and freedom—they don't even work for their living: They live to work. But those of us who have read Hefner's *Philosophy* know that in the States, too, there are sensible people who strive for freedom and individualism; for a world in which the state

serves its citizens; for a world in which religion serves those who want it, but does not force itself on those who do not; and for a world in which the individual can enjoy his favorite drink, meal or girl without having to fight the jealousy or zealotry of persons or organizations minding other people's business.

The problems of sex, which should be solved naturally and simply, are a proper subject of philosophy, because sex is the human activity most distorted by moralists, and it is philosophy's job to put things in their proper perspective. *PLAYBOY* has a big job to do in the future. I've met many Americans in Europe who were individually broad-minded and tolerant, but when in the company of other Americans stopped being themselves and exhibited a sterile, mass-minded mentality. Despite its dynamism, America could become a nation of sheep. Nor is Europe free of the dangerous symptoms of uniformity and mass-mindedness. *The Playboy Philosophy* offers a valuable rallying point for all people concerned with freedom and individuality. Many Europeans support Hefner's ideas, and are happy to know that such clear thinking is being expressed in the American press.

Charles M. G. Van den Eynde,
Journalist
Brussels, Belgium

The foregoing was sent to us partially in French, with a challenge—in English—to our staff to find among its members "the clever guy who will ensure the translation." A Chicago, nous avons le fin mot aussi.

EXISTENTIALISM AND COMMON SENSE

Of the following, which philosophy does *PLAYBOY* follow or admire the most: existentialism, Bertrand Russell, common sense? Also, what do you think of social nudism?

Marvin Pritchard
Edmonton, Alberta

We believe in existentialism to the extent that we believe in the individual's responsibility for making himself what he is; we admire Lord Russell as a courageous, astonishingly lucid man; and we're rather suspicious of so-called common sense, since it can mean just about anything a person cares to have it mean—with the emphasis too often on the former word, rather than the latter. As for social nudism, we certainly prefer it to the unsocial kind.

*"The Playboy Forum" offers the opportunity for an extended dialog between readers and editors of this publication on subjects and issues raised in our continuing editorial series, "The Playboy Philosophy." Address all correspondence on either "Philosophy" or "Forum" to: The Playboy Forum, *PLAYBOY*, 232 E. Ohio Street, Chicago, Illinois 60611.*



keeping with current community standards, the critic has to throw whatever sort of missile is left to him—even if there isn't any logic behind it. All this person knows is—for reasons he, in many cases, only dimly understands—he *must* throw stones; the need is rooted in the uneasiness he feels about sex itself and any such open and favorable expression of sex.

In a very real sense—and I don't mean this facetiously—I feel that most of the criticism we receive reveals more about the critics than it does about PLAYBOY.

TANENBAUM: But that doesn't answer the question.

HEFNER: No, and I will try to answer it.

TANENBAUM: And, in a sense, you're reacting with the same sort of *ad hominem* argument that's made toward you.

HEFNER: I didn't mean to carry the conversation away from a specific answer to your question. I simply felt that an explanation of this attitude about PLAYBOY and about sex might be helpful in our further discussion of the sexual problems we face in contemporary society.

When you suggest that it might be better to not be sexually oriented . . .

TANENBAUM: I'm not saying that. I'm asking, what is your view—what has led you to conceive the Club in these terms?

HEFNER: The Playboy Club is an extension of the personality and point of view of the magazine. To whatever extent it is sexually oriented, it is meant to be a *tribute* to sex—an expression of sex that is attractive and appealing. There is, of course, a good deal more to the magazine than this; and we attempt to introduce as much of the total concept into the Clubs as possible. There's the comfortable contemporary decor—more

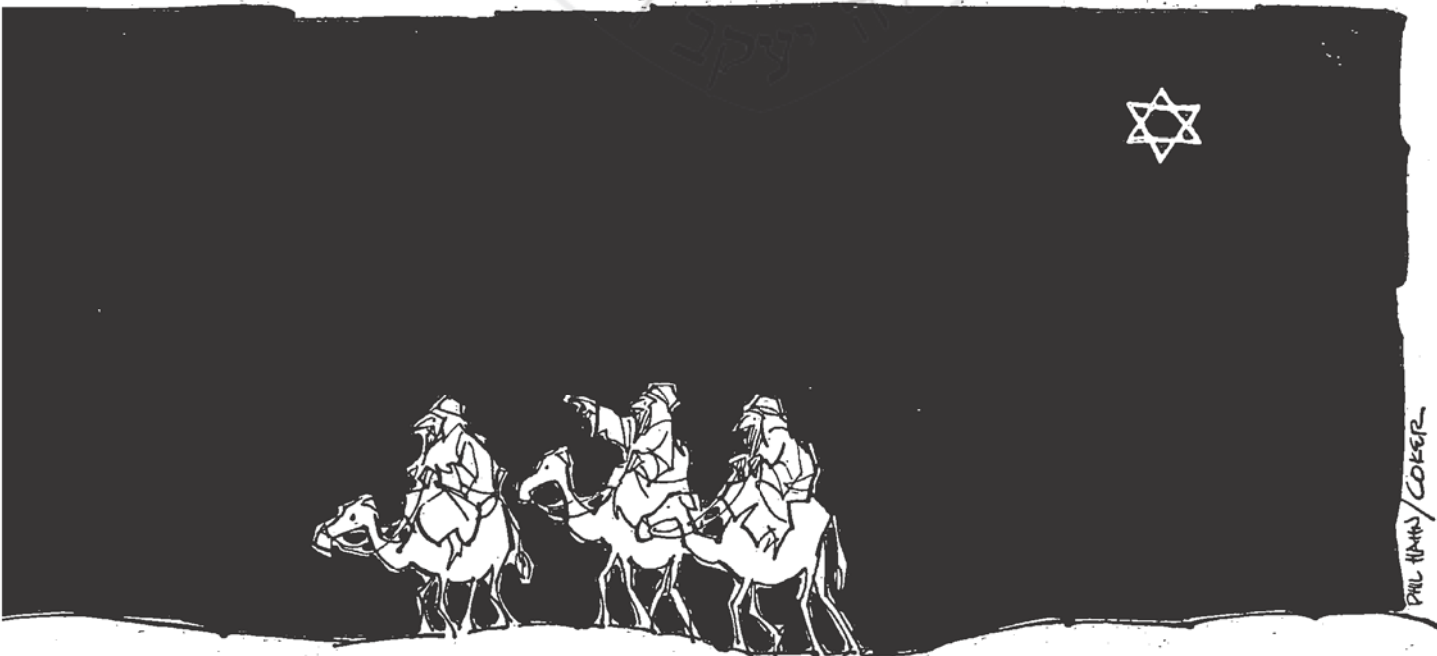
like an urban apartment than a night club. There's the good food and drink: fine wines and liquors, steak dinners and an elaborate buffet—all available for the price of a single drink. In New York and Chicago, and in the Hollywood Club which will be open at the end of the year, we also have the V.I.P. Room—which stands, of course, for "Very Important Playboy" . . . (Laughter) Here we offer the very finest cuisine. There's the entertainment: vocalists, comedians, folk acts, instrumental jazz combos—The Playboy Club is now the biggest user of nightclub talent in the country and the major training ground for fresh, young talent; and we were the first well-known club to use Negro comics, which opened the door for all of the colored comedians who have gained national recognition over the last few years. There is also a relaxed friendliness and an uncommercial atmosphere in the Clubs—a welcome change from the "Hello, suckers" attitude of many of the night clubs of the past—with no hustling of the customers, honest drinks and an honest check. And, of course, there's the feeling of status and exclusivity, because it's a key club—for members only. Though there's nothing very exclusive about a club that currently has over 300,000 keyholders. *Fraternity* is really a better word—the pleasure of mingling with others of similar tastes and attitudes about life.

O'CONNOR: Well, Hugh, I was going to ask you, in terms of some of the things we were talking about earlier in the course of the program, whether you don't think that part of the criticism of antisexuality that you have received—from *Motive* and some of the other little magazines of religious and literary opin-

ion—isn't based on the feeling that Playboy, in both the magazine and the Clubs, represents a rather depersonalized sort of sex? An uninvolved and untouchable sort of sex for people who can't really communicate with it, or really can't enjoy it, because there's something nasty about it, or dirty about it, or it has that overtone. And if this is true, then our sexual revolution really hasn't occurred; and what we're really doing is pandering to a bad sexual concept which has been hanging on in the Western world for some years.

HEFNER: Since one of the things PLAYBOY is especially concerned about is the depersonalizing influence of our entire society, and considerable editorial attention is given to the problem of establishing individual identity, through sex and as many other avenues of expression as may be available in a more permissive society, it is wrong to suggest that we favor depersonalized sex. Not unless, by depersonalized sex, we are referring to any and all sexual activity that does not include extensive involvement, commitments and obligations. In this sense, it is true, to the extent that the magazine emphasizes the pleasures rather than the problems of sex, and focuses on that period of life in which real personal involvement is not yet desirable—a time of transition into maturity, prior to accepting the responsibilities of marriage and family.

I certainly think that personal sex is preferable to impersonal sex, because it includes the greatest emotional rewards; but I can see no logical justification for opposing the latter, unless it is irresponsible, exploitive, coercive or in some way hurts one of the individuals involved. I



stated before that PLAYBOY doesn't purport to present more than a part of life in its pages; but I would also add that there are certainly a plenitude of publications, and numerous other sources of opinion in our society, that are forever stressing togetherness, and the trials and tribulations of total commitment.

As for The Playboy Club, I think there is every justification for keeping its sex depersonalized, uninvolved and untouchable; nor is there anything inconsistent in this. Far from being anti-sexual, it is simply a policy that separates business from pleasure.

The suggestion, stated or implied, that because The Playboy Club projects a sexual image, we are obliged to engage in some form of commercialized vice, or, turning *Time's* comment around, offer the facilities of a bordello's "second floor," is, to me, irrational nonsense. This

idea is predicated on the false assumption that any source of sexual stimulation should also offer sexual gratification. On that premise, Flo Ziegfeld—whose extravagant Broadway productions in the Twenties were famous for their beautiful, nearly nude showgirls—was remiss in not making his lovely ladies available with the orange drinks during intermission. And every producer of a sexually oriented movie, every publisher of a sexually explicit book, the manufacturers of exotic perfumes, low-cut evening gowns, bikinis, and those responsible for every other source of sexual stimulation under the sun would be obliged, by this logic, to engage in white slavery on the side.

The fact that there is still extensive sexual sickness in society—and I would be the first to agree that there is—doesn't mean that we're not involved in a sexual

revolution; it only indicates the extent to which a radical readjustment of our sexual values is needed. And far from pandering to the negative sexual concepts of the past, we are among the most outspoken advocates of a more healthy, open and positive outlook on sex. We treat it with humor, which helps to take the onus off it; we place our emphasis on approval rather than negation; and we attempt to treat sex in as attractive and appealing a light as possible.

O'CONNOR: But there has always been blue material, there have always been sexual jokes, there have always been clubs with a sexual atmosphere. I think you find yourself with a problem, when you start explaining your philosophy, because then we start examining you in terms of what you say you are. And some of the self-justification that you have for the role that you play becomes the subject for a lot of scrutiny; and the scrutiny, I think, at times seems to indicate that this is a very shrewd, mechanistic, materialistic viewpoint about how to handle sex and make money out of it. Now I'm not criticizing you for the economic or profit motive, because you spoke about our society's attitudes on this before, but I'm wondering about the shrewdness with which you manipulate things.

HEFNER: Are you speaking now in terms of PLAYBOY, or in terms of its Editor-Publisher?

O'CONNOR: Of just yourself . . . related to what you have been saying here, and what you have expressed in your *Philosophy*, as compared with what exists outside of that . . .

HEFNER: Well, I would have to take the conversation rather far afield to answer that completely, which I don't want to do. But I will say that what I have written in *The Playboy Philosophy*, as well as what I have said here this evening, is a sincere expression of my own quite deeply felt beliefs; and I held most of them several years before I ever thought of starting PLAYBOY—though they weren't nearly as thoroughly thought out or formulated then.

As for the profit motive, it's there, of course. And I *do* hope that it isn't necessary to apologize for that. But I'll add—and only because I've been asked—that I'm also the least business oriented, monetarily motivated self-made millionaire of my own particular acquaintance. What I do, I do because I believe in it, and enjoy it; and I never cease to be amazed by the success of it. After almost eleven years, PLAYBOY is still just as much of a kick for me as it was in the very beginning; maybe even more so.

O'CONNOR: Speaking of millionaires in general—and I haven't met too many of them—they all seem to be enjoying what they're doing, which is making money.



"Better show me something a bit more powerful—I'm a Peeping Tom."

HEFNER: I'm as pleased as I possibly could be about my success. But what pleases me most about it is that it permits me to continue doing what I'm doing; I get the greatest satisfaction out of the work itself and out of the response to it. If that weren't so, I wouldn't continue to be so involved in editing the magazine, and work so long and hard on special projects—like the *Philosophy*—on a schedule that too often can only be described as grueling; I'd go on to other business ventures, or just sit back and enjoy my success.

GARY: I feel we've been caricaturing *PLAYBOY* a little. But I also felt, in doing a little of my homework for this discussion—reading your *Philosophy*—that you were caricaturing religion a little. And so, while we sort of mutually do this to one another, I'd like to hear some of your comments about where you think religion stands. You've written a good deal about this with regard to the sexual revolution. Let's see if we can, you know, let you be aggressive for a while and we'll have to defend ourselves.

HEFNER: Well, judging from what has already been expressed here this evening, I think we would be in general agreement that our Judaeo-Christian heritage includes an element of antisex that has gotten out of hand over the centuries, and has given us more problems than benefits. Too much of the emphasis has been on "Thou shalt not"; too much on guilt, fear and suppression.

This is old stuff to you, I'm sure, gentlemen, but when I first became involved in researching the origins of our religions' antagonism to sex, for some of the early installments of the *Philosophy*, what I discovered came as something of a revelation. I learned that prior to the Exile, the Jews were a remarkably permissive people regarding sex; I also found that Christian antisex began less with Christ than with St. Paul. It was strongly re-emphasized by the Church of the Middle Ages, but reached its zenith after the Reformation, of course, with Puritanism and the period thereafter, particularly in the latter part of the last century. Western religion, especially the Puritan and post-Puritan aspects of it in America and England, has a far more antisexual history than most of the members of contemporary society realize; and yet this is precisely where our own irrational sex attitudes come from.

Now, what I find especially encouraging—and, very honestly, it was one of the reasons I looked forward to coming on to this show so much—is the amount of, for want of a better phrase, "soul-searching" that currently seems to be taking place within many of our major religions; a re-examination of old dogma and ideas, with sincere interest being expressed, in previously conservative quarters, in the development of a new, more liberal point of view on the subject.



"Tonight? Same time, same place?
Providing we're here, of course."

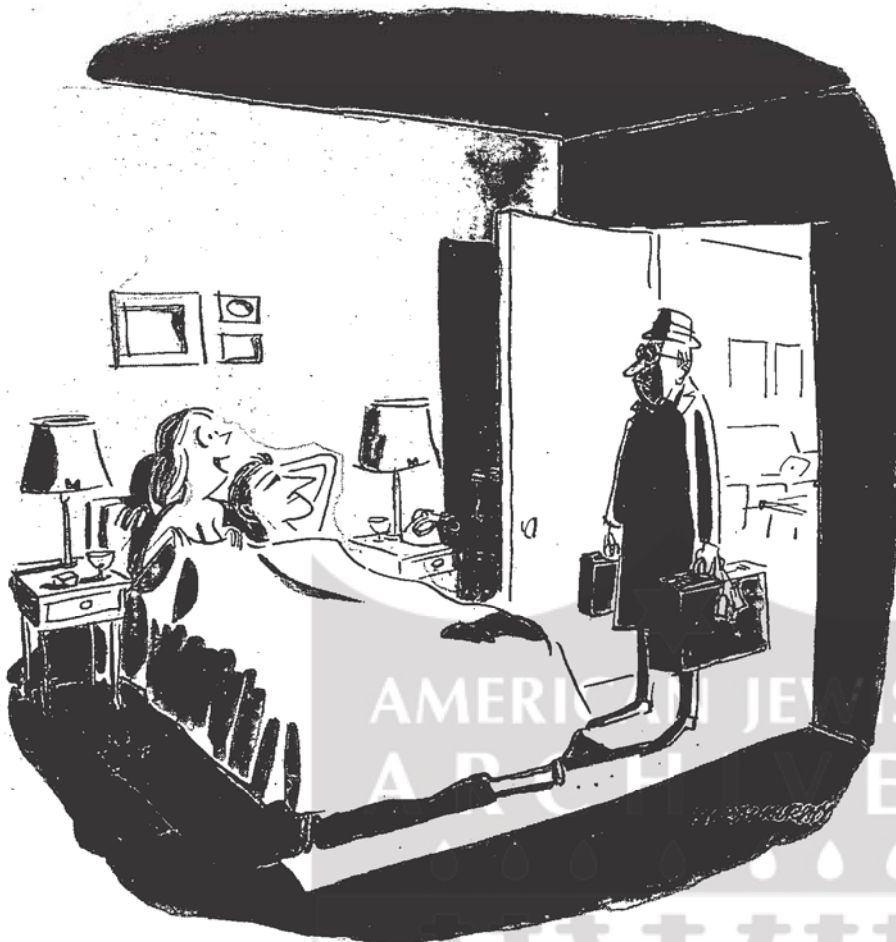
This is very important, it seems to me, because it eliminates any tendency to categorize the situation as secular *vs.* religious; the sexual revolution that is taking place in society, at large, seems to have awakened many members of the clergy to the need for reappraisal and, hopefully, readjustment of some of the long-established attitudes within organized religion itself.

GARY: Would you be prepared to admit that religion is a mixed bag? That is, you've got a lot of people on your side—when it comes to an assertion of a certain amount of freedom—as well as a number of opponents, in the religious community. So that, when you talk about puritanism or moralism, a blanket indictment may blur as much as it reveals . . .

HEFNER: I certainly agree. As a matter of fact, I have made a special point of quoting, in the *Philosophy*, a number of liberal statements regarding sex by various religious leaders. And in the last January issue, I attempted to break down and to categorize, as much as I could, the principal positions on this subject—both historical and contemporary—of the three major religions of

Western society. I closed each section with references to the progressive views that are being expressed today within Protestantism, Catholicism and Judaism. **TANENBAUM:** It is quite clear that you are, in some ways, closer to the Jewish perception of the normalcy in sex—in terms of the total conception of life in the Jewish and rabbinic traditions—than might be generally realized. I think you have indicated this in your editorials, but perhaps it deserves reaffirmation—that from the very assertion of the first principles regarding the place of sex in man's total scheme of things, it is viewed as a gift of God, but that it must be seen as part of the total design of man's goal in life, which is, essentially, to achieve holiness as his eternal motivation.

Part of our problem and, I think, part of my reaction to The Playboy Club is—while also a reflection of the puritanism of my view as an American—the shocked sense that this represented a distortion out of context. Now it may very well be that the only way to achieve some kind of *via media*, some kind of middle ground, in this is through a constant op-



"Oh it's you, darling . . . for a moment there you gave me quite a start . . .!"

position of contraries—that we move from a polarity of puritanism, on the one side, to an opposite side. . . . Well, I think something like this does operate in man's nature.

HEFNER: Any time you are involved in a period of serious social transition, I think you are apt to find excesses . . .

TANENBAUM: You go through a period of flux and transition where you get all kinds of opposites coming into play.

HEFNER: Incidentally, you don't mean to suggest, I hope, that you consider The Playboy Club one of those excesses . . .

TANENBAUM: The thing I'm trying to get at here is that I think everything that relates to the sexual life in America is going through this transitional stage. All of our traditional perceptions of marriage, as a covenant, and all of the rest of it is undergoing a radical re-examination. And part of the difficulty we experience, I think, as religious people—at least, I speak for myself—is that in the past, until very recently, we had really been following the trends rather than giving serious examination to each new situation and providing some kind of clarification of the problem, within a theological, as well as social context.

Typically, we sort of stand back and we watch the kinds of social developments that take place—of which The Playboy Club is one—and then we're taken aback by this and we say, what does this mean to us? And I think that, for us, The Playboy Club represents something much more than a manipulation or exploitation of sex, although that may be intended. For us, I think the significant fact is its great success; and the fact that, as I saw, very substantial men in the community, businessmen, corporation executives, come to this place regularly to have their meals, and derive, apparently, something out of this experience. It means that something is happening to the sexual mores of America which we are not really coming to grips with in a significant way.

GARY: I also was your guest, with my wife, one night at the New York Playboy Club. And I must say my interpretation of this experience differs somewhat from yours, Marc, in that I viewed it as a kind of—as Mr. Hefner characterized his magazine at one point—as a service and entertainment package. For me this was, you know, a different kind of evening.

And I have a feeling—I don't know if

it's true—but I have a feeling that you're, well, not exactly making fun of sex, but you're taking it fairly casually . . .

HEFNER: Yes.

GARY: There is an entertainment aspect to this which I'm reluctant to probe too deeply. Partly because The Playboy Club is a raving success—and success has always threatened me a little—but more than that, I have the feeling that there is a certain tongue-in-cheek character to all of this . . .

HEFNER: There is meant to be.

GARY: And to a certain extent, this is true of the magazine as well, although you do get your hooks in there occasionally.

HEFNER: One of the best ways of decontaminating anything is to poke fun at it; levity lets the fresh air and sunshine in, where before all was dank and dark. And so, as a reaction to the deadly serious and, I thought, stifling attitude that our society had about sex—in which it was viewed as either sinful or a sacred cow—we spoofed it, from the very first issue. And this same lighthearted approach also exists in the Clubs, and most everything else we do.

BURNETT: It's interesting that all you gentlemen talk about sex in connection with The Playboy Club, yet in my infrequent visits there—I haven't seen any sex at all.

HEFNER: That is interesting, because it illustrates how extremely personal each individual's reaction to The Playboy Club really is.

The Club's popularity is directly linked to the magazine, of course. And this unique relationship creates an image for the Club that is far more persuasive than anything we could ever introduce within the four walls of our Bunny domain. Almost everyone who comes to The Playboy Club brings his own particular preconceived image with him: and what he finds there—or, more accurately, how he views what he finds there—is very much dependent on what he expected to find.

TANENBAUM: What impressed me was the fact that the majority of the people I saw there were middle-class and upper-middle-class businessmen, many with their wives and families, enjoying dinner. The only irreconcilability I found was the fact that these men were being served by Bunnies, who were seminude, practically; and the men with their wives seemed to have averted their eyes, to avoid looking at the Bunnies in their wives' presence; while the men who were there alone, or in the company of other men, engaged in a great deal of suppressed joking about this. And I felt something unreal and fantasylike about this encounter.

HEFNER: I can only suggest—and you'll have to analyze your own reactions to see if you feel there is any validity in

this—that what caught your attention, and the significance that you gave it, may have been very much related to your own previous frame of reference. Perhaps, because this was The Playboy Club, you were specifically looking to see the reactions of the other people around you; whereas, if you happened to be in another club in which pretty girls, in similarly brief attire, were working, you might not have noticed the same sort of incident, because you wouldn't have been thinking about it.

And when we talk about the brevity of the Bunny costume, it must be mentioned that our Bunnies make frequent guest appearances—in their Bunny bunting—on network television, so they must be more respectably attired than has been suggested here. The Bunny costume is actually far less revealing than a great many swimsuits you would find on the public beach on any summer afternoon.

But because it is The Playboy Club, everything seems, as you have suggested, a little unreal and fantasylike; everything becomes a bit bigger than life—or, in the case of the Bunny costume, a bit smaller. The difference is supplied by the observer, however, not by Playboy; and it's a mighty good thing, too, because it is this personal view of The Playboy Club that is largely responsible for its success.

Beauty, as jazzman Paul Desmond once observed, is in the eye of the keyholder. **TANENBAUM:** This is very true. This may be entirely subjective.

But aren't you, for example, trading on a kind of popular conception of *bun-ny*—that has a sort of sexual or scatological significance for people? Because I found that the word was bandied back and forth, for example, by a group of businessmen who were there alone, without their wives; the joking that went on—up and down the four or five floors of the Club—was like a college boy's fraternity night. And it was all done in this kind of sniggering way.

It may be inevitable that you have this kind of confrontation, when you bring these elements in relation to one another, but what did you intend by this? And how do you react to it?

HEFNER: First of all, I selected a rabbit as the symbol for the magazine almost eleven years ago, at a time when I could not have conceived, in my wildest dreams, that there would be anything one day called *The Playboy Club* and that it would be filled with beautiful females called *Bunnies*.

However, I *did* select a rabbit as the symbol for the magazine because of the humorous sexual connotation, and because he offered an image that was frisky and playful; I put him in a tuxedo to

add the idea of sophistication. There was another editorial consideration, too. Since both *The New Yorker* and *Esquire* use men as their symbols, I felt the rabbit would be distinctive; and the notion of a rabbit dressed up in formal evening attire struck me as charming, amusing and right.

When we conceived the idea for The Playboy Club, we simply adapted the rabbit symbol as the most logical one for the girls who were to work there—and that's how the Playboy Bunnies, and the Bunny costume, were born.

Now, it's quite possible for someone to respond to this, or to anything else having to do with sex, in a sniggering way: but I do believe—as I've already said—that this reveals more about the person than about *PLAYBOY* or The Playboy Club.

PLAYBOY VS. MOMISM

TANENBAUM: You know, it occurs to me, it is quite possible to see in this a response to the role of woman in our religious tradition, especially as it has evolved here in the United States. A great deal has been written, by Philip Wylie and others, about what has been called Momism. It has been suggested,

with considerable evidence to substantiate it, that America has become a matriarchy . . . that women dominate American society . . .

O'CONNOR: They do economically . . .

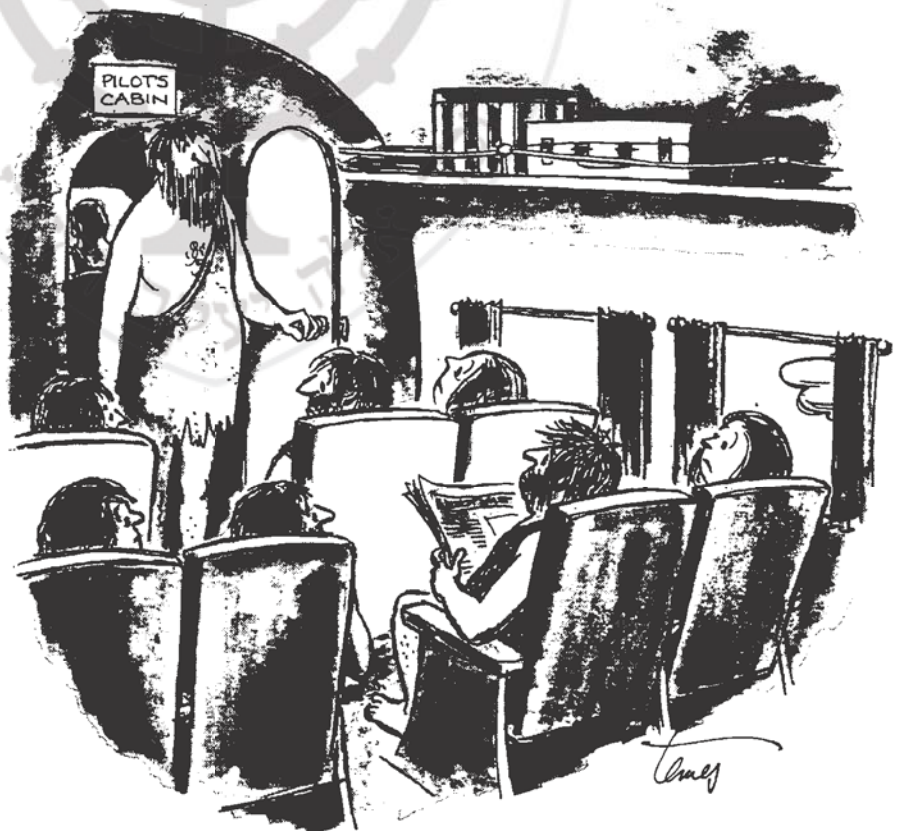
TANENBAUM: Then what *PLAYBOY* is trying to do, perhaps, is restore the balance. That is, in the *PLAYBOY* context, man begins to reassert his masculinity. Even if it has to be contrived out of Chicago by Hugh Hefner, it needs help from someplace.

HEFNER: You've just touched upon the very heart of the matter, I think. This is the real key to an understanding of *PLAYBOY*, and its success, in contemporary society.

TANENBAUM: The Playboy Club offers a world in which the man reassumes his dominant position; and the woman becomes a "bunny" who wears a sexy costume and plays the passive role of a waitress.

BURNETT: Yes, but on the other hand, Rabbi, you yourself said that you were amazed, when you were at The Playboy Club, to see the number of men who were there with their wives and families . . .

HEFNER: *PLAYBOY*'s over-all point of view on the male-female relationship in society certainly doesn't limit women to



"Don't be alarmed, folks, but I think we just entered the Twilight Zone!"

the role of Bunnies in The Playboy Club. Essentially, what we are saying, editorially in the magazine, is that men and women should each have *separate* identities—that they are both happiest when their roles complement rather than compete with each other.

Since the turn of the century, there has been a considerable breakdown in the cultural patterns that distinguish the sexes—especially here in America—causing us to drift toward an asexual society, in which it becomes increasingly difficult for either sex to find true satisfaction or fulfillment in its interpersonal relationships with the other: This is one of the two primary causes, I believe—the other being the increasing complexity and automation of our civilization—for the erosion of individual identity that was mentioned earlier.

Since PLAYBOY is a magazine for men, it is natural for us to place most of our emphasis on the problem of male identity. PLAYBOY stresses a strongly heterosexual concept of society—in which the separate roles of men and women are clearly defined and compatible. Though we are sometimes accused of having a dehumanized view of women, our concept actually offers the female a far more human identity than she has had historically in the Western world.

It is our religious tradition that has tended to look upon woman as a depersonalized object, or possession, by continually associating her with its antagonism toward sex. Sometimes the emphasis has been placed upon the temptation to sin in womankind, and sometimes the emphasis has been placed upon feminine purity and chastity; but whether they were considered creatures of the Devil, or placed upon a pedestal, their status in our antisexual society has always been that of an *object*, rather than a *human being*.

SEX AS SIN

BURNETT: That brings us back to something that was said before the coffee came—I think you brought it up, Rabbi—and that's the idea of sex as sin. Which is what Hugh Hefner is hitting on here; and I think we might devote our attention to that.

HEFNER: We've talked around it, but we haven't really gotten into it yet.

BURNETT: Our religious tradition teaches that sex is a sin outside of the marriage sacrament; and sometimes inside the marriage sacrament as well.

HEFNER: This is the real point behind much of what we've been discussing here today, and I don't think we're going to get any general agreement on it.

O'CONNOR: No, you've got a new theology, kid. You're going to have to defend it.

HEFNER: That's why I'm here.

But I believe it is behind the thought that you expressed earlier, Father, that

the Church has not fully spelled out a positive attitude toward sex; and, Rabbi, your comment that the sex-sin relationship has been one of the significant shortcomings in our religion, down through history—with the religious approach to sex traditionally negative, expressed as a concern over sex as a temptation, rather than a more positive view of sex as, indeed, an extremely important, worth-while . . .

BURNETT: . . . And pretty wonderful . . .

HEFNER: . . . Yes . . . aspect of life.

TANENBAUM: I think, perhaps, that it has been true, Mr. Hefner, that we've seen sex in a context of the opposition of vice and virtue. And in the greater part of our traditions, and much of our theological writing—certainly in the Christian theological literature—there is this enormous preoccupation with sex as vice.

HEFNER: With virtue, when it has been mentioned, usually taking the form of antisex—if chastity can be called antisex. The general tendency has been to associate chastity and virginity with virtue; and, conversely—sex with sin.

TANENBAUM: May I ask, what do you see as the implications in this? Let's grant the assumptions that are implicit in what you are saying—that this is the way that sex has been looked upon in Western religious tradition. What are the implications of this tradition, which we have inherited, for American sexual behavior and morality, as you see it?

HEFNER: The major implication from a religious point of view, it seems to me, is the need for the clergy of all faiths to take an altogether new and considered look at this question, because it is very, very obvious that the traditional Judaeo-Christian teaching on sex is not being accepted—is being openly flouted by an otherwise, by and large, religious community. One of the Ten Commandments states, "Thou shalt not commit adultery"; but adultery is commonplace. This taboo against extramarital sex was extended, during the Dark Ages, to include all forms of premarital sex, as well; and the majority of our society pays lip service to the prohibitions, without making any serious attempt to live by them.

O'CONNOR: But, Hugh, you're basing these conclusions on the rather dubious statistics of Mr. Kinsey, which you fall back on quite continuously in your *Philosophy*. I think we run into the obvious difficulty that we don't have a valid statistical analysis of a sampling. I suppose, then, we will always have to argue about the fairness of the sampling.

HEFNER: Surely you're not . . .

O'CONNOR: But, if there is a sexual revolution, then statistically we should be able to support ourselves. If there is a sexual re-examination, then what is the

basis for the sexual re-examination? Is it because of the failure of our sexual mores, or because we're suddenly aware that sex has some ramifications that we didn't realize before?

HEFNER: If we refuse to accept the evidence now available regarding sexual behavior and are unwilling to concede that a sexual revolution really does exist, then we are only unnecessarily delaying coming to grips with the problem, it seems to me, by presumably wishing it weren't there.

O'CONNOR: Are you indicting religion, then, not just for the current sexual situation, but because it's not coming to terms with modern life? Is this what you're saying?

HEFNER: No, I'm *not* indicting it, because I feel there is more progress being shown within many areas of organized religion today, with a forthright and favorable consideration being given to the very questions we are talking about here, than ever before in history.

I'm quite optimistic, incidentally, not only about the eventual outcome of the sexual revolution, as far as secular society is concerned, but also about the part that organized religion can play in the establishment of a new, more rational morality for society.

Now, I'm not suggesting that simply because there is a disparity between code and conduct, it is necessarily the code that is at fault. I think both the beliefs and the behavior deserve a dispassionate reappraisal. It ought to be kept in mind, however, that the sexual taboos in our religious tradition were conceived many centuries ago, long before the understanding and insights regarding the psychosexual nature of man were supplied by psychiatry and socioanthropological studies.

Most of organized religion had no difficulty in adjusting its doctrine to the discoveries of Darwin; it seems reasonable to hope that the same progressive attitude may now be displayed toward the discoveries of Freud.

In the next installment of "The Playboy Philosophy," Editor-Publisher Hugh M. Hefner continues this religious round table with a discussion of the primary principles underlying the "Philosophy" and an exchange of views on the subject of premarital and extramarital sex.

See "The Playboy Forum" in this issue for readers' comments—pro and con—on subjects raised in previous installments of this editorial series. Two booklet reprints of "The Playboy Philosophy," including installments one through seven and eight through twelve, are available at \$1 per booklet. Send check or money order to PLAYBOY, 232 E. Ohio Street, Chicago, Illinois 60611.

