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BOOK REVIEW

Parent, Child and Sex

Mary M. Welsh

George A. Pflaum, Publisher

Dayton, Ohio

1970

120 pp.; \$1.25

Parents struggle with a dual concern in regard to the sexuality of their children. First they must contend with the problem of giving sufficient information and understanding to the child about his own sexuality and his relationship with others. Secondly, a parent is responsible for the moral training which will allow the child to integrate his sexuality into a pattern consistent with the culture and customs of the society into which the child is entering. The concern of parents is understandable since children come to physical sexual maturity before they can be said to be fully morally mature. The fears of adults generally spring from the memory of their own earlier irresponsible actions or desires.

Mary Welsh has given a real source of help to these concerned parents in her new book, *Parent, Child and Sex*. The prime requirement for such a book is that it be readable by the proposed audience; this book is easily read. Few will find anything insulting

or repugnant in the presentation. Perhaps the best compliment I can give is that the book expresses a concern for a moral approach without ever becoming preachy or denominational.

There are a minimum of factual errors. Some may object to the method of approach to a subject, but most of these objections will be academic and not detrimental to the purposes of the book. Mrs. Welsh gives samples of what you might say to your boy or girl. These should be helpful for the timid parent who cannot picture himself speaking of masturbation or intercourse with his own child. There is a slight danger that suggested explanations may be used verbatim or that topics be covered like material in a course.

What I appreciated most about the book was the insistence on approaching the child or young adult with respect and acknowledging his right to privacy. Responsible sexuality is not an enforceable concept. External behavior can be demanded, but maturity must grow amidst freedom of choice. This book will help parents assist their children to this maturity.

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