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[Book Review of] *Know Your Body*, by Charles W. Norris, M.D. and Jeanne Owen

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That is the key to success. The success rate is 99.6%. There are 0.4 pregnancies per user couples over the first 12 months as a result of the method not properly working. An additional 4.8 pregnancies occur because of either teaching or using-related error. Couples are told that there are only two behavior patterns. Those who want to achieve pregnancy have intercourse on days that are considered fertile; those who want to avoid pregnancy avoid intercourse on days that are considered fertile. There is no such thing as "taking a chance." If a couple identifies a day as a fertile day and then has intercourse they are behaving in a pattern trying to achieve pregnancy. This is very important because many, especially in the Tongo series and Los Angeles series, identified days as fertile and then "took a chance."

Some 21.2% of couples indicate that abstinence is reasonably difficult or very difficult. However, the vast majority found that abstinence was not deleterious to their overall relationship.

The 23rd and last chapter deals with the scientific studies which have confirmed the method's authenticity. Only 2.4% of women found that it took longer than 40 seconds to check for mucus; 93% found it was easy or very easy to check for mucus.

A total of 97.3% of clients found that the amount of material in the introductory system was appropriate. Explanations were found to be usually or always clear by 99.8% of clients. The teacher is rated for six different items.

Dr. Hilgers is not going to go away. He is going to standardize teaching. He will have success rates better than the pill and the IUD. His continuation rates will be excellent. He will have national and regional meetings of teachers.

Some questions remain. How about the thousands whom Mercedes Wilson has trained in Central and South America with much less detail and precision? How about the thousands who have been taught in India by Sister Dr. Catherine Bernard? The average teacher has an eighth grade education and the average learner, a fifth grade education. How about the thousands whom Sister Mary McHugh has taught in the churches after Mass has ended in Korea? The World Health studies showed 90% of women charted their first cycle well, and 95% charted well after 3 cycles.

Reading Dr. Hilgers's book won't hurt anyone. It will make each of us a better teacher, more likely to acquire a better technique of teaching. We are likely to become more precise. Our goal is to reach every couple in the world. The book is recommended to all.

— John J. Brennan, M.D.

Know Your Body

Charles W. Norris, M.D. and Jeanne Owen

Our Sunday Visitor, Huntington, Indiana, 1982, 96 pp., \$3.95, paperback.

This book is a little gem which holds promise of considerable versatility as a resource. It could very well be the book which parents and young teens read together to begin discussions of sexuality. It could certainly be integrated into a junior high or high school curriculum and it could very well be a primer for the learning of fertility awareness.

The book consists of six lucid and understandable chapters on growing older, human sexuality, human fertility, reproductive hygiene, sexual responsibility and

natural family planning. It includes some review questions, a book list and a glossary of terms.

The values are interwoven and laid on subtly. Although written from a Christian perspective, it is not highly doctrinaire and its appeal is to broadly-accepted principles. The scientific aspects are sound and not at all pedantic, and the approach is to both sexes although, not unexpectedly, there is more to say about female reproduction. The treatment of dating and courtship is very sketchy, but the authors have a disclaimer for those who would want the book to provide more than its limited purpose would allow. It can be read easily in a single sitting and then reread for its technical points. It should be read to be shared, however, and it merits a wide acceptance.

— Eugene F. Diamond, M.D.
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Indefensible Weapons

Robert Jay Lifton and Richard Falk

Basic Books, New York, 1982, 301 pp., \$6.96.

Indefensible Weapons presents a case against nuclearism from the viewpoint of psychology and politics. The psychological case is developed by Lifton; the political case by Falk. While the two authors present the case from different viewpoints, both agree on the solution to the problem—a movement away from nuclearism.

Nuclearism consists in entrusting our security to nuclear weapons. Lifton finds a curious inconsistency here, putting our security in ever-increasing numbers of the very weapons which have initially undermined it. He argues that current policies and justifications are based on certain illusions regarding these weapons. These, in turn, are engendered by our feelings of helplessness toward nuclear weapons, feelings which we refuse to face. The illusions are that we can control and limit nuclear warfare, that we know how to deal with nuclear weapons and what to expect, that we can prepare for nuclear bombing, that we can protect ourselves against it, that we can harden ourselves to the destruction caused by these bombs and recover from it, and that we can handle it all in a reasonable way.

According to Lifton, nuclear weapons have introduced man to the image of extinction. Man has always been confronted by death, even by large numbers of deaths, but now, for the first time, he is faced with the possible extinction of the human race, and even of all life on our planet. The author sees this as having a profound impact on our way of life, and particularly on what he calls our sense of immortality. He presumes that this sense depends on the continuation of human life on this planet. This, of course, is not the traditional Christian understanding of immortality, but there is no doubt that the prospect of imminent extinction of life on our planet would have a profound impact on our lives.