

PSYCHOLOGY

50% of Men Ignore Vows

Marital infidelity varies in frequency with age and social level. It occurs most frequently among urban males and less frequently among those in the rural area.

➤ MORE than one-third and probably one-half of American married men are unfaithful to their wives at some time in their married lives.

This is one of the findings about the sex life of American boys and men obtained in a nine-year study by Dr. Alfred C. Kinsey and associates of Indiana University.

Confidential case histories of 12,000 persons from every social level and several racial groups were obtained in interviews by Dr. Kinsey and his staff. A report on the facts learned from 5,300 white males will be published Jan. 5 in a book, *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male*, by Dr. Kinsey, Wardell B. Pomeroy and Clyde E. Martin (W. B. Saunders Company).

100,000 to be Studied

The study, supported largely by funds from the Rockefeller Foundation administered by the National Research Council, will be extended, Dr. Kinsey hopes, to include 100,000 persons. Women and girls are included in the study. The findings on them will be published later. Object of the study is to get scientific facts about sex, completely divorced from moral or social interpretations.

The figures on marital infidelity, although higher than any previously published, may not be entirely accurate, Dr. Kinsey admits. Even his highly developed technique for interviewing and winning the confidence of the persons questioned could not overcome the fear many men had about admitting unfaithfulness.

"The most striking thing about the occurrence of extramarital intercourse," Dr. Kinsey states, "is the fact that the highest incidences for the lower social levels occur at the younger ages, and that the number of persons involved steadily decreases with advancing age. Lower-level males who were married in the late teens have given a record of extra-marital intercourse in 45% of the cases, whereas not more than 27% is actively involved by age 40 and not more than 19% by age 50.

"In striking contrast, the lowest incidences of extra-marital intercourse

among males of the college level are to be found in the youngest age groups, where not more than 15% to 20% are involved, and the incidence increases steadily until about 27% is having extra-marital relations by age 50."

The actual figures obtained in the study show 27% to 37% of married males in each of the five-year age periods admitting to some experience in extra-marital intercourse. Allowing for the cover-up by some who feared to give honest answers on this question, Dr. Kinsey believes "it is probably safe to suggest that about half of all married males have intercourse with women other than their wives at some time while they are married."

"For most males extra-marital intercourse is usually sporadic, occurring on an occasion or two with this female, a few times with the next partner, not happening again for some months or a year or two, but then occurring several times on every night for a week or even for a month or more, after which that particular affair is abruptly stopped."

Most of the extra-marital activities are had with companions, prostitutes supplying only 8% to 15%.

More Frequent in Urban Areas

Extra-marital intercourse occurs most frequently among males living in cities or towns, less frequently in rural populations.

"To judge from those few groups on which religious data are available, extra-marital intercourse seems to occur much more frequently among those who are less actively concerned with the church, and much less frequently among males who are devoutly religious," Dr. Kinsey reports.

"The differences between devout and inactive members of any religious group, however, are nowhere near so great as the differences between social levels."

How the husband's unfaithfulness affects the marriage seems also to be different in different social levels. More data and analysis of them are needed, Dr. Kinsey says, for evaluating the social significance of extra-marital intercourse, but he offers the following "fragments"

bearing on the subject:

"At lower social levels, where the most extra-marital intercourse occurs, wives rather generally expect their husbands to 'step out' and some of them rather frankly admit they do not object provided they do not learn of the specific affairs which are carried on. Nevertheless, extra-marital intercourse is the sexual factor which is most often involved in marital discord at that level."

"Extra-marital intercourse is less often accepted in middle class groups. While it may not involve as much quarreling and fighting it often leads to divorce."

"The extra-marital intercourse of the upper social level much less often causes difficulty, because it is usually unknown to anyone except the two persons immediately involved."

Youth No Wilder

"In general, the sexual patterns of the younger generation are so nearly identical with the sexual patterns of the older generation in regard to so many types of sexual activity that there seems to be no sound basis for the widespread opinion that the younger generation has become more active in its socio-sexual contacts," he declares.

"The only instances in which a larger number of the younger generation is involved at an earlier age apply to such activities (petting, for one), as are not ordinarily considered when the charge is made that the younger generation is becoming increasingly immoral. The charge more often concerns pre-marital intercourse with companions and with prostitutes, and homosexual contacts."

On all of these latter points, the records for the older and the younger generations are so nearly identical that no significant differences can be found. Nor could Dr. Kinsey and his staff find any evidence that a larger number of the younger generation are involved in homosexual activities.

"Thirty years ago, petting involved fewer persons and was a less highly elaborated activity than it often is today," Dr. Kinsey found.

Among men who reach the college level, about 87% of the older generation was involved. Today, nearly 95% has had such experience. Among men who never go beyond grade school, only 78% of the older generation had any petting experience, contrasted with 94% in the present day.

The frequencies of petting activities reach their height between the ages of 21 and 25, the study showed.

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