

# Seminars to explore chaos caused by sex-role changes

By Jim Dickey  
Staff Writer

How are "macho man" and "happy Susy homemaker" going to cope in a world of house-husbands and telephone linewomen?

Sex-role changes have occurred so quickly in the past 15 years many people are bewildered and uncertain about what our alternatives can and should be; according to psychologists at the Institute for the Advancement of Human Behavior at Stanford.

Institute spokeswoman Johanna Shapiro said the forces working against traditional sex roles can create a seeming chaos.

"We are confronted by a contemporary panorama of working mothers, daycare children, househusbands, telephone linewomen and airline stewards; women who live 30 years after their last child is grown; men who at midlife discover the emptiness of upward mobility even as women avidly pursue the executive suite," she said.

"In the face of this seeming chaos, we search for meaning and order: often by longing for the good old days, when both men and women knew what was to be expected. But the good old days are gone for good. Now we must be prepared to examine new alternatives and choose new models."

Shapiro, an assistant professor at UC Irvine Medical Center, is the author of "How To Be Your Own Woman: Self-Control Strategies for Women," to be published in the fall.

The institute next month will present a symposium on the subject, "The Changing Psychology of Men and Women: Beyond Sex Roles to a HUMAN Liberation." It will be held at the San Jose Hyatt House May 4-6.

The symposium will include experiments in sex-role reversals, with Warren Farrell, author of "The Liberated Man," organizing a men's beauty contest as a way to examine "dysfunctional male-female interactions."

Farrell's seminar will present techniques to help people "experience directly what it is like to be treated like a member of the opposite sex."

Ellen McGrath, psychiatry professor at UC, Irvine, Medical Center, will discuss major conflict areas between men and women: power and intimacy.

"We live in an age of 'number one,'" McGrath said. "We are told that mental health equals



Johanna, Deane Shapiro are seminar leaders

putting ourselves first. Yet at the same time most of us choose to live and work with others.

"The unavoidable result is tension and conflict, particularly between men and women, as we struggle to understand and fulfill our unique, emerging needs."

Her workshop will deal with ways to resolve conflicts between men and women, between power and intimacy.

McGrath currently is focusing on the development of androgynous and cooperative models of power and intimacy among professional men and women.

Johanna Shapiro and her husband, Deane, who is president of the institute and academic dean at Pacific Graduate School of Psychology in Palo Alto, will present a seminar on sex roles and self-control.

The seminar will deal with choosing a vision

of an ideal that "transcends both traditional and "liberated" sex-role stereotypes."

It will present ways to use "self-management strategies to learn alternative ways of acting and feeling in order to implement this vision."

Deane Shapiro, who has delved deeply into Zen Buddhism, has written of the Eastern tradition of joy in a recent book, "Precision Nirvana." He refers to human and transcendent joy as the "cosmic chuckle."

Janet Spence, psychology professor at University of Texas at Austin, will speak of the "androgynous personality" and the claim that androgynous individuals, those who possess both masculine and feminine qualities, are healthiest and most capable of functioning fully."

Research with college students, she said, has shown that "masculinity and femininity do not relate negatively to each other, thus supporting a dualistic, rather than a bipolar, conception of these two psychological dimensions."

The psychologist said a "substantial number of men and women are androgynous — high in both masculine and feminine characteristics, while some are high in neither.

People do not have to relate to one another within the framework of traditional male-female roles, according to psychologist Steven F. Morin, co-founder of the Association of Gay Psychologists.



Janet Spence will speak on the 'androgynous personality'—those having both masculine and feminine qualities

All couples can learn, he said, "from the way gay males have worked out ways of relating to one another that are not based on traditional male-female roles.

"Much of what is going on, for example, between younger men and women now involves women not wanting to stay in their traditional roles. This is causing a great havoc in relationships.

"The roles worked out by gay males have to do with negotiation as to who is best at what — like who will do the cooking, the social planning, the balancing of the checkbook."

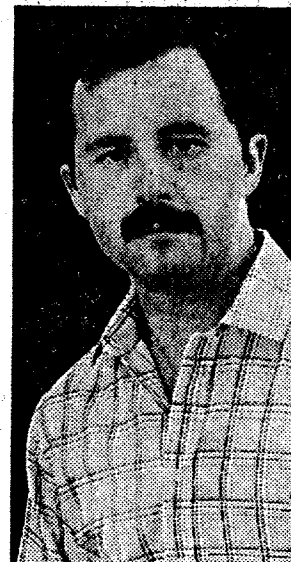
Morin will present a seminar on "Sex Roles and Homosexuality: The Gay Struggle for Human Liberation," with Phyllis Lyon, co-director of the National Sex Forum.

Lyon is co-author of "Lesbian/Woman" and writes and lectures extensively on lesbian, homosexual and human sexuality. An activist in the gay and women's movements, she is a member of the San Francisco Human Rights Commission.

Their seminar will present ways that gay people can deal with pressures to conform to what society believes is male or female.

These pressures on males, Morin said, include being "very independent, hiding emotions, being competitive, having very little need for security and not expressing tender feelings."

Other nationally prominent psychologists will speak at the symposium.



Steven Morin will present a seminar on sex roles and homosexuality