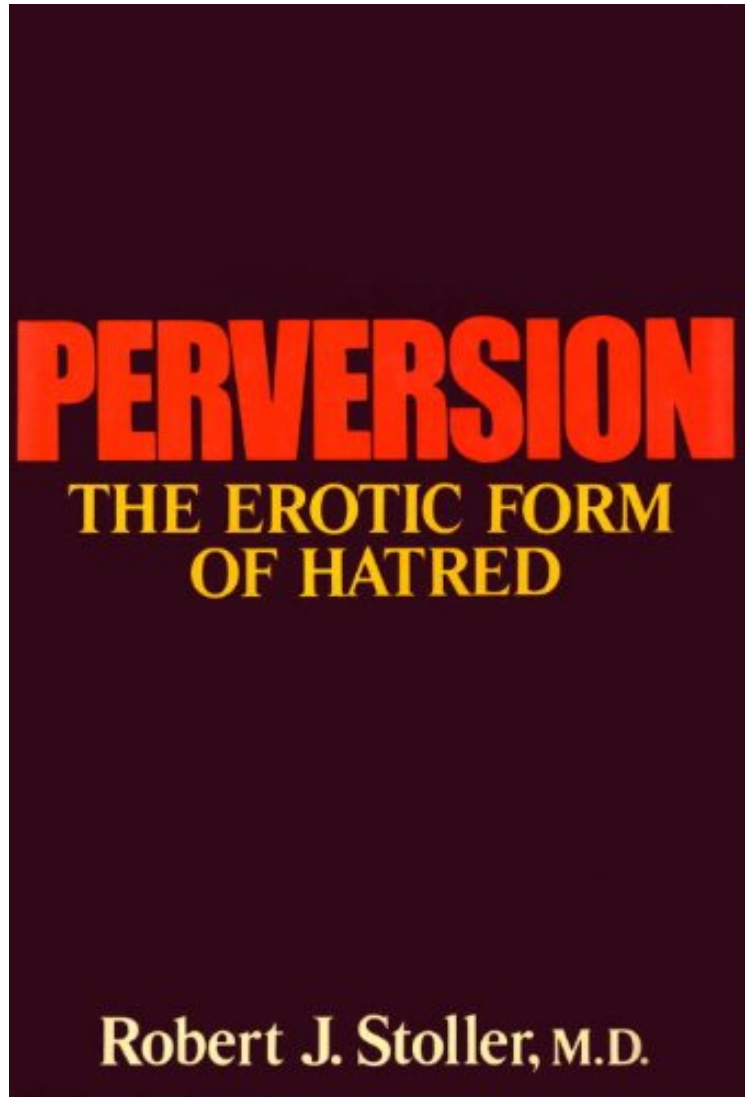


[Download] Perversion

Perversion

Robert J. Stoller Md

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Robert J. Stoller Md : Perversion before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Perversion:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy CustomerGreat book. Eductoinal yet easy to read through17 of 17 people found the following review helpful. Freudians, Behaviorists, Biological Determinists, Sexual moralizers, alike get a run for their moneyBy Sophia BezirgianianDr. Robert Stoller is a master iconoclast--he manages to give quite a diverse set of characters, who espouse orthodox and often warring versions of sexual behavior and identity, their due. In writing this classic on perversions, Dr. Stoller brings to bear his knowledge and practice as a psychoanalyst, his extensive field research in pornography, his study of the work of psychologists, sex researchers and therapists, geneticists, human physiologists, and those sociologists who study gender behavior across cultures. The real

achievement in this book however, is not his incisive analysis and critiques of the above, but rather his distillation and transcending of these to hone in on a fundamental and yet neglected area of knowledge of human sexuality--the nature of DESIRE. Stoller notes that most biologically oriented research on human sexuality restricts itself to the study of EXCITEMENT, which is in fact the biological fuel for desire. Desire is where the action's at--and (he is truly astonished to find that) neither the biological nor the psychoanalytic crowd has really touched it. "Perversions" is divided into two sections. The first is a review of the insights, flaws, and gaps of extant theories on sexual identity and preferences as summarized above. Here he also defines what he thinks distinguishes the perverse from the non-perverse. Key insights: 1. One cannot look at purely the BEHAVIOR involved, but why it is desired. Thus for example, many types of heterosexual sex can be perverse, and in turn, many homosexual forms would not be. For example, in either same or "opposite" sex activity, promiscuity is perverse when its advocate is a "Don Juan" type, who sees his target women/men as objects --simply notches on his belt. This principle leads to an important generalization: 2. If the sexual "target" is "dehumanized"--whether by the fetishist who uses a shoe as a stand-in for a woman, or by the Don Juan, or by the man who seeks partners not based on their potential to be his intimates but rather by a superficial trait such as their skin color, or size of anatomical parts--then the behavior is a perversion. In Part II of Perversions, Stoller presents what is his truly original perspective and thesis: that men and women are shaped/molded not simply by biology (i.e. hormones neurons and genes) or by the culture they are embedded in, but BY UNIQUE SCRIPTS DURING THEIR UPBRINGING into normative vs. non-normative heterosexual, homosexual, or perverse sexual desire and behavior. What follows is a list of the key insights I gained from Dr. Stoller's fascinating exposition of this thesis. 1. Freudian theory of masculinity and femininity is turned on its head. Not only are "castration anxiety" and its female counterpart "penis envy" myths, but according to Stoller, their very basis--that the driving force for sexual identity is longing for MALENESS (either to keep it or to compensate for not ever having it) has it backwards! In fact, Stoller argues, boys strive for masculinity as a way to ward off their fundamental wish to remain merged with mother (because such wish creates "symbiosis anxiety"). Therefore, it is the longing for FEMALENESS that drives masculinity; masculine identity is a defensive maneuver, driven by fear of the power of mother, not father! Here is one very novel point of view--the female has the power to break the boy, thus he runs hard into masculine identity. 2. DESIRE is embodied in a set of fantasies which are, once established, entrenched. This crystallization of desire into specific scripts is the fundamental determinant of affinity for heterosexual, homosexual, perverse or non-perverse sexual behavior. Furthermore, each person's unique set of scripts is a product of his experience with father, mother, siblings, and any other major players in his/her childhood (from infancy through early childhood). (Very important: There is no judgment or moralizing whatsoever toward any particular child rearing pattern!) 3. The key element driving these scripts (both the perverse and non-perverse) is TRAUMA. The more serious the trauma, the greater the hostility generated in the victim, and the more perverse the nascent script. In perverse scripts, sex becomes an arena in which this hostility becomes a driving force--it is then usually disguised or masked (to make it bearable) and then resolved or discharged in the form the ritualized sexual script dictates. Moreover (in yet another insightful analysis), Stoller shows that trauma, albeit a much milder form, drives non-perverse sexual scripts too. All children undergo at least some degree of trauma by virtue of the ubiquity of the intrinsically traumatic developmental task of separation from, and identification with, same or other sex parent. Thus, all sexual behavior involves, to a lesser or greater extent, reenactment in disguised form, and attempts to master, the source of the trauma. 4. Stoller's expositions of the unique set of fantasies or scripts which characterize major perversions such as sadomasochism, transvestism, transsexualism, voyeurism, exhibitionism and their genesis in early rearing experiences, are all fascinating reads. This book was for me a real education into the genesis of the sexual lives of my patients, and to the degree that Stoller's insights generalize to the wide spectrum of sexual desire and fantasy in all sexual beings, an education in the broad and fascinating world of erotic life.⁸⁴ of 87 people found the following review helpful. Ahead of its Time By D. Davison Robert J. Stoller was a man of intellectual force who was definitely ahead of his time. My review follows the reading of the 1975 edition of Perversion: The Erotic Form of Hatred. I was at first cautious about reading a book from so long ago because I expected it to be dated. However, the title intrigued me. I found it to be quite an enjoyable and informing read, and it expressed views on diagnosis and labeling that are very thought provoking. The main premise of the book is that perversion is an outlet people have for their sexual hatred and rage. It develops from the relationship with the parents from an early age, mainly from gender confusion. There is a lot of leaning on Freud's theory, but it is never accepted verbatim by the author. Fantasy is seen as a defensive structure that develops to salvage sexual pleasure that would otherwise be lost. A person develops fantasy about a certain object, person, or way of expressing himself sexually in fantasy. From this the perversion develops. In a way, perversion is seen as a tragedy or failure of childhood turned into an adult triumph. Where sexual pleasure was threatened to be removed because of trauma from childhood, a situation develops where the childhood situation of victim and oppressor is reversed by the fantasy. The boy/man who can not function sexually with a woman salvages his ability to have sexual pleasure by alternate means. He takes his revenge by inflicting the same humiliation and hatred on the object of his perversion that he sees as having been inflicted on himself as a child. There is reference also to how we use diagnosis as a means of labeling persons, like homosexuals, when in actuality there is no one 'homosexual'

condition but a multitude of 'homosexualities'. Sexual preference is not seen as something we can write in stone, but is something whose variable nature is inherent in all of us. Perversion is in fact a way that we keep sexual energy channelled into constructive avenues in society instead of destructive ones. Perversions are kept private, allowing us to keep our facade of our idea of good society running smoothly. We are all seen as perverse to some extent. It's really a matter of degree as to who gets labeled or not. This is a sampling of the ideas in this book. I don't know if these ideas are dated or not, but I found it to be quite informative and a really enjoyable read. I highly recommend this to anyone interested in human sexuality.

This new study, part of Professor Robert Stollers well-known, continuing work on sex and gender identity, is especially concerned with the psychological forces that contribute to sexual excitement in men and women. The author looks at sexual aberrations in order to learn what they can tell us about the dynamics of normal sexual development. He shows that perversions are different from other aberrations in that the dominant force in perversion is hostility directed in reality or in fantasy toward one's sex objects. And he shows through fascinating examples and case material how childhood frustrations, traumas, and conflicts are gradually transformed into sexual excitement by means of fantasies. In a daydream, pornography, or a ritualized pattern of sex practice, a scenario is created in which are hidden remnants of the earlier painful experiences, now redone to make a triumph out of the trauma: the victim becomes the victor. It has been noted that men practice a wider variety of perversions than women. Professor Stoller suggests that men's greater propensity to perversion in our society is related to the mother-daughter infant symbiosis an intimate merging in which the infant does not distinguish its own boundaries as separate from its mother's. If that intimacy is too intense or too prolonged, the infant boy's sense of oneness with femaleness and femininity persists into the later months when masculinity begins to develop. A flawed sense of maleness can then result, thereafter threatening the development and expression of a stable masculinity. In contrast, should a comparable intense symbiosis develop between a mother and her infant daughter, the sense of merging with mother will only augment the girl's future femininity, although it may result in other kinds of complications.

Why in this enlightened day would one choose to entitle a work *Perversion*, a term that is becoming passe? The great research published in the last decade or two has taught us that aberrant sexual behavior is found in other species, is ubiquitous in man, and is the product of brain and hormonal factors that can function independently of anything we might call psyche. Then too, their findings make researchers regret society's moral stance that sexual aberration is unnatural - sinful - and the repressive social action that follows. Thus, in ridding ourselves of the concept of perversion, we have the tempting combination of good research serving a humane cause. Yet it is my contention, explored in the body of this book, that perversion exists. The connotations of the word are unpleasant and have a flavor of morality and therefore of free will that is antiquated in these days of science and determinism. It is to avoid such connotations that the softer terms "variant", "deviation," or "aberration" are used. More and more these days, decent people - many of them scientists - are concerned about the price their fellows, and even more, whole societies, pay in their effort to suppress victimless aberrant sexual behavior. And so, in the name of decency, it has become the style, using the trappings of Science, to try and get rid of the concept of perversion. This is done not only by changing the terms to ones with less severe implications but by trying to show that there are no (or very few) states that fit the nasty connotations of "perversion". These workers reach their conclusions by objective means that they feel avoid the dangers of introspective material, such as by studying brain mechanisms in an animal and man, which reveal capacities for aberrant behavior inherited and laid down in hormonal organizations of the central nervous system: by statistics that unmask how widespread are those allegedly heinous acts; by anthropological studies that show aberrant sexual behavior to have been the usual - not the exceptional - throughout history and across cultures; and by observation of or experimentation on intact animals. In all these cases, data have been gathered disclosing that aberrant sexual practices are found throughout the animal species and are ubiquitous in human behavior. It is easy, then, to conclude that the widespread aberrance in man does not really signify willed behavior - that is, sinfulness, disobedience to accepted morality - but rather a natural tendency of the sexual impulse in the animal kingdom. From the Introduction by the Author About the Author Robert J. Stoller M.D. was, until his death, Professor of Psychiatry at UCLA School of Medicine. His books on human sexuality include 'The Transsexual Experiment', 'Perversion: The Erotic Form of Hatred', 'Splitting: A Case of Female Masculinity', 'Porn: Myths for the Twentieth Century', 'Pain and Passion: A Psychoanalyst explores the World of S and M', 'Observing the Erotic Imagination' and 'Presentations of Gender'. Dr Stoller was a psychoanalyst but because he recognized the need to understand how biological forces contribute to the development of mental functions, he took account of the important work that had come out of the laboratories. He also emphasized the need for some psychoanalysts to include some of the findings and concepts of leading theorists if they are to understand better the origins and maintenance of the ground themes of personality, of which gender identity (masculinity and femininity) is certainly one.