

Quotes from:

# It's Perfectly Normal: Changing Bodies, Growing Up, Sex & Sexual Health

Robie Harris, (Candlewick Press, 1994)

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The Planned Parenthood of Central Texas (PPCT) brochure for the 2003 **Nobody's Fool** sex-ed conference announced that all students in grades 7-9 would receive the book, **It's Perfectly Normal** (referred to below as **PN**).

**PN** avoids dealing with sex within a moral context. Throughout, sexual decisions are simply a matter of "health." **PN** advocates healthy decisions not moral decisions and moral behavior. And the health concern is physical—excluding psychological and spiritual impact. Mention of morality seems to be taboo for **PN**. Healthy decisions are aided by good information according to **PN**. In a pre-conference news interview defending **PN**, Pat Stone of PPCT emphasized "power" in addition to health. Stone stated, "The book provides much needed information. And information is power."

What follows are words from **PN**. However, it is often said that a picture is worth a thousand words. **PN** is full of pictures designed to dissolve modesty and desensitize children into thinking of sex in a casual way. **PN** is just 89 pages. But in those 89 pages, **PN** manages to include 71 nude drawings—mostly teens but also babies and the elderly. There is no point in trying to describe the pictures. You must see them for yourself.

What follows are several quotes from the book with comments in brackets.

**Intercourse:** (14) Most people don't have sexual intercourse only when they want to make a baby. Most often, they have sexual intercourse because it feels good. [The idea of intercourse as self-centered recreation is introduced early.]

**Intercourse:** (15) It makes sense to wait to have sexual intercourse until you are old enough and responsible enough to make healthy decisions about sex. [Morality is irrelevant. Marriage is irrelevant. It's simply your health that counts.]

**Homosexuality:** (17) The ancient Greeks thought that love between two men was the highest form of love.

**On negative views of homosexuality:** (18) Usually these people know little or nothing about homosexuals and their views are often based on fears or misinformation, not on facts.

**Masturbation:** (48) Whether you masturbate or not is your choice. Masturbation is perfectly normal.

**Masturbation:** (48) People of all ages masturbate—babies, kids, teenagers, grown-ups, and the elderly. Girls and boys often start to masturbate at puberty, but many start before.

**Families:** (50) Babies and children grow up in all sorts of families. There are kids whose mother and father live together, or whose mother and father live apart, or who have only one parent, or whose parent or parents have adopted them, or who live with a parent and a step-parent, ... or who have gay and lesbian parents, or foster parents. [The one type left out is a family with a mother and a father who are married to each other.]

**When to have a baby:** (52) Usually it's easier and healthier for kids and teenagers to wait until they are older to have a baby. [Again, it's all a matter of health.]

**Baby before birth:** (60) In the uterus, a sac filled with watery fluid forms around the developing baby and protects it against pokes, bumps, and jolts. [In this chapter, the unborn is called a baby. The name changes to fetus for the abortion chapter.]

**Decision to have intercourse:** (68) Whether or not to have sexual intercourse is a decision each person has a right to make. [Right. Parents and pastors should stay out of this decision.]

**Decision to have intercourse:** (68) Many young people choose to wait to have sexual intercourse until they feel they are either old enough or responsible enough to make healthy decisions about sex. [Consider health. Forget about morality and marriage.]

**Contraception:** (69) Condoms, spermicide, and sponges are types of birth control that can be bought at a drugstore, a convenience store, or even a supermarket. They are usually displayed in a special section or on the counter next to the cash register.

**IUD:** (71) An IUD, or intrauterine device, is a small plastic and copper device that is placed inside the uterus by a trained health-care professional and can prevent an egg from planting itself in the uterus's lining. [Hmm, that should have been "fertilized egg."]

**"NFP":** (72) Some methods of birth control, such as the rhythm method or the withdrawal method, are not considered effective.... It is very difficult to know when an egg has been released, because the time can vary from month to month—especially for many teenage girls. [Today's methods of natural family planning are not considered. To demean NFP, it is linked with "the withdrawal" method.]

**Contraception:** (72) Some religions and groups and some individuals believe that using any method of birth control is wrong.

**When to do it:** (72) Your parents, doctor, or nurse are good people to talk with about birth control, postponement, and abstinence.... Neighborhood health clinics or family planning clinics are also places to go for information. [Oh yes, visit Planned Parenthood—but not your pastor.]

**Abortion:** (73) People's feelings about having abortions are not always simple, however, and can range from relief to sadness, from worry to fear.

**Why have an abortion:** (73) There are many reasons why a female or a couple might want or need to end a pregnancy. [The justifications for abortion are many. These are mentioned: female illness, fetal disease, mother or father too sick to care for a baby, parents can't afford a baby, parents feel they are too young, female feels she was not ready to become pregnant, female was raped, female is single and not able to raise a child, or female did not intend to become pregnant.]

**Closing words of book:** (84) It's important to make the decision that is best for you—one that is safe and healthy for you. Everyone makes mistakes and has bad judgment once in a while, and you probably will too. But most of the time, you can and will make responsible choices—ones that are good for you, right for you, and healthy for you and your friends. [Wow! No moral standards here. Waiting for marriage is not mentioned in the entire book. With moral relativism, every teen sets his or her own standards. For those occasional mistakes guess who will be there to abort your unborn baby. It is such a fraud for Planned Parenthood to say they advocate abstinence.]