

All You Need is Love?

The morality of sexual relationships through the eyes of young people

Sue Sharpe and Rachel Thomson



[BLANK PAGE]

All You Need is Love?

The morality of sexual relationships
through the eyes of young people

Sue Sharpe and Rachel Thomson

NCB promotes the voices, interests and well-being of all children and young people across every aspect of their lives.

As an umbrella body for the children's sector in England and Northern Ireland, NCB provides essential information on policy, research and best practice for its members and other partners.

NCB aims to:

- challenge disadvantage in childhood
- work with children and young people to ensure they are involved in all matters that affect their lives
- promote multidisciplinary cross-agency partnerships and good practice
- influence government policy through policy development and advocacy
- undertake high quality research and work from an evidence-based perspective
- disseminate information to all those working with children and young people, and to children and young people themselves.

NCB has adopted and works within the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Published by the National Children's Bureau
National Children's Bureau, 8 Wakley Street, London EC1V 7QE
Tel: 020 7843 6000
Website: www.ncb.org.uk
Registered charity number: 258825

© National Children's Bureau 2005

ISBN 1 904787 35 5
Ebook ISBN 978-1-907969-31-7

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

The views expressed in this publication are those of the authors, and do not necessarily reflect those of the publisher

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form by any person without the written permission of the publisher.

Cover by JVT Design
Typesetting by Curran Publishing Services, Norwich
Manufactured in the EU by L.P.P.S. Ltd, Wellingborough

Contents

<i>About the authors</i>	v
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	vii
1 Introduction	1
A brief look back	3
The Respect Study	5
2 Patterns in sexual values	7
3 Making sex legitimate	13
Romance: Sex as legitimised by love	14
Play: Sex as legitimised by pleasure	17
Security: Sex as legitimised by commitment	20
Equity: Sex as legitimised by consent	23
Legality: Sex as legitimised by the law	27
Safety: Sex as legitimised by its consequences	34
Reputation	34
Pregnancy	37
Safe sex	38
Conclusion	40
4 Debating sexual values	43
Abortion and parenting	43
Abortion	43
Parenting	49
The right age to have children	53
'Children need two parents?'	55
Representations of sex	57
Teenage magazines	58

Pornography	62
Homosexuality	69
Young people and homophobia	70
Homophobia for boys and young men	71
Homophobia for girls and young women	73
Creating other perspectives	76
Experiences of gay and lesbian young people	78
Conclusion	81
5 Engaging with young peoples sexual values	83
Patterns and structures	84
Values regimes	85
Debates	86
References	87
Index	89

About the authors

Sue Sharpe is a freelance social researcher whose research interests have mainly been the lives and experiences of young people, but have also involved family life, motherhood, and men's health. She has published various other books based on research with young people. Her current work includes a longitudinal study of youth transitions based at London South Bank University, where she is a Visiting Fellow.

Rachel Thomson is Lecturer in Children and Young People in the School of Health and Social Welfare at the Open University. She has been involved in research around young people, sexuality, values and identities since 1998 and has published widely in these areas. Her most recent project is a study of motherhood as a changing social identity.

[BLANK PAGE]

Acknowledgements

The research on which this ‘thinkpiece’ is based was a collective endeavour involving Sue Sharpe and Rachel Thomson, Sheila Henderson, Janet Holland, and Sheena McGrellis. Simon Blake provided editorial support and contributed to the concluding Section Five.

[BLANK PAGE]

Love, love, love Love, love, love Love, love, love. There's nothing you can do that can't be done Nothing you can sing that can't be sung
Nothing you can say but you can learn how to play the game It's easy. Nothing you can make that can't be made No one you can save
that can't be saved Nothing you can do but you can learn how to be you in time It's easy. All you need is love All you need is love All you
need is love, love Love is all you need. Love, love, love Love, love, love Love, love, love. All you need is love All you need is love All you
need is love, love...Â The Beatles lyrics are property and copyright of their owners. "All You Need Is Love" lyrics provided for
educational purposes and personal use only. "All You Need Is Love" is a song by the English rock band the Beatles that was released
as a non-album single in July 1967. It was written by John Lennon and credited to the Lennonâ€“McCartney partnership. The song was
Britain's contribution to Our World, the first live global television link, for which the band were filmed performing it at EMI Studios in
London on 25 June. The programme was broadcast via satellite and seen by an audience of over 400 million in 25 countries. Lennon's
lyrics were