



To: Lewis & Clark Library Board of Trustees  
From: Judy Hart, Library Director  
Date: August 27, 2008  
Subject: Compilation of Material Review for The Joy of Gay Sex, third edition

### **The Title**

The Joy of Gay Sex fully revised and expanded third edition was written by Dr. Charles Silverstein and Felice Picano, with illustrations by Joseph Phillips, copyright 2004. This paperback edition was published by Collins, an imprint of HarperCollins, a reputable publisher. The title includes bibliographical references and index.

### **Introduction:**

The preamble of the Material Selection and Removal Policy states the philosophy of the Lewis & Clark Library: The Library collection exists for the benefit of its patrons. "American democracy functions only if the full range of human ideas is accessible to the people. Proponents of various points of view must be able to make their cases fully and openly, however popular or unpopular they may be." The United States Constitution and Article II (Section 7) of the Constitution of the State Montana protect the free expression of ideas and the private reading rights of individuals.

### **From the Material Selection and Removal Policy:**

The collection is developed and maintained to enable all individuals to find the information they want according to their own free choices. No materials are excluded from consideration because of the race, nationality, religion, gender, sexual orientation, political or social view of the materials, the author or the intended audience. Individual items, which in and of themselves may be controversial or offensive to some patrons, may appropriately be selected if their inclusion will contribute to the range of viewpoints and effectiveness of the Library Collection as a whole.

**Access:** Reading, listening and viewing are individual private matters. Patrons may select or reject materials for themselves or their own minor children, but are not free to restrict the freedom of others. As an agency of government, the Library cannot prescribe what is appropriate material for any of its patrons. Parents and guardians are

responsible for all use of the library by minor children. The Library hopes, encourages and expects parents to take an active role in helping younger people review materials which they may use or borrow from the library. Library staff is available to provide professional guidance and make age appropriate recommendations.

**MCA 41-1-101. Minors and adults defined.** (1) Minors are:

- (a) males under 18 years of age;
  - (b) females under 18 years of age.
- (2) All other persons are adults.

**From the Material Selection and Removal Policy:**

The collection will be organized and maintained to facilitate access. No materials will be labeled, restricted, sequestered, or altered because of any controversy about the author, subject matter, or intended potential audience.

The Joy of Gay Sex, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition was selected for inclusion in the library's collection to help meet the needs of the gay community in Lewis & Clark County.

As reflected in the Lewis & Clark Library Collection Development Policy, three major review sources, Booklist, Publisher's Weekly and Library Journal, are used to select items in the areas that are collected.

The Material Selection Policy lists general criteria for the selection of materials in order to build collections of merit and significance. Materials are considered for the collection according to these objective guidelines. Materials added to or retained in the Library's collection are considered in terms of these guidelines. The points to consider when evaluating material are taken from these criteria. Following is compilation of Material Review Committee for Joy of Gay Sex.

***Challenged Material Review – Questionnaire***

***Page numbers of objectionable passages:***

People may find some of the illustrations objectionable, but overall this book has very useful, psychological information including excellent sections for teenagers (totally updated from 2<sup>nd</sup> edition).

Some may feel the entire subject matter is objectionable.

There are numerous pages (especially those with drawings) that may be objectionable to some, but to others may be completely appropriate, useful and potentially life-saving.

***Why is the material objectionable?***

To some patrons, any book that condones homosexuality in any way would be objectionable. The presence of drawings of sexual acts likely increases the number of

patrons who might find it objectionable but it is a guide and the absence of illustrations would greatly lessen its utility.

The content may not align with some partisan and doctrinal opinion.

***Recommendation:***

Retain the item – House in its place in the regular non-fiction section.

***1. Suitability of subject and style for intended audience:***

The intended audience for this title is gay men with one section written for teenagers. As such the subject, style, and presentation seem suitable. Very thoughtful and professional coverage of the subject matter.

***2. Relation to existing collection and other materials on subject, including scarcity of materials on the subject.***

The Library has 109,272 titles and 141,038 items in the collection

The Library provides materials on sex instruction for all segments of our service community. Included in the 59 titles we have under the subject heading “sex instruction” are books for heterosexual adults, books specifically directed to heterosexual men and heterosexual women, books for children and teens, guides to help parents teach their child about sex, sex instruction for the aged, one on sex instruction for individuals with intellectual disabilities, one book on sex instruction for gay men and one book on sex instruction for lesbians. The Joy of Gay Sex is the only title for gay men in the Library specifically on the subject. Men Like Us: the GMHC complete guide to gay men’s sexual, physical, and emotional well-being, is broader in content, focusing on mental health, health and hygiene, and is more dated. (Copyright 2000).

The Library has 89 titles, fiction and non-fiction under the subject heading “homosexuality”, some written for gays, some for parents of gays, others for general information on homosexuality. Titles include a wide range of viewpoints.

***3. Importance of subject matter to the collection:***

Lewis & Clark County has a gay population and the title is in keeping with the Materials Selection and Removal Policy. Their needs and views must be met. The book was originally published in 1977, and has remained in print. The title includes vital information for the gay community, in an educational format. The Library has had the title in the collection since 1993. The second edition, The New Joy of Gay Sex was added to the collection in 1993. The last replacement copy of this edition circulated 12 times. The second edition was weeded from the collection due to release of the third edition, not because of content.

The Joy of Gay Sex, third edition was added to the collection in October of 2003. The third edition has circulated well, fulfilling a need in the community. It circulated 15 times through October 2006. The missing title was replaced in November of 2007 and circulated three times before it was pulled for review by the Material Review Committee.

**4. Suitability of physical form for library use:**

The item is a standard paperback book format.

**5. Present and potential relevance to community needs:**

This title includes valuable information for safe encounters for a growing part of our community. Although this book is a sex manual for gay men, it contains incredibly interesting and useful information on living as a gay man, including coming out to family, dealing with rejection, safe sex, domestic violence, self-esteem, growing older, HIV Disease, Sexually Transmitted Disease's, drugs, rape, finding a physician, and saying no. A section for teenagers offers guidance to help them deal with their sexuality, coming out to family, how to handle rejection by parents, and dealing with bullying and harassment. Resources in the appendix include a listing of organizations as well as bibliographic resources related to specific subjects such as health, coming out, gay counseling centers, AIDS treatment and information centers, psychology, employment and aging.

**6. Appropriateness and effectiveness of medium to content:**

It is appropriate to present material on sex instruction in book format. The illustrations provide visual examples of healthy sexual relations. The content is educational.

**7. Insight into human and social conditions:**

The title is more than a sex manual for gay men. The psychology of relationships is discussed, healthy relationships are advocated, as is healthy self-esteem. Parts of the book dealing with issues gay men face are very interesting.

**8. Reputation and/or significance of author:**

Dr. Charles Silverstein is an author, gay clinical psychologist and psychotherapist, and holds a Ph.D. in Psychology from Rutgers University. He is the founding editor of the Journal of Homosexuality. He has been honored as a Fellow for his work by the American Psychological Association.

His essays and professional papers have been published widely in journals and anthologies. He is the founding director of the *Institute for Human Identity* and *Identity House* in New York City.

His works include:

- A Family Matter: A Parents' Guide to Homosexuality
- Man to Man: Gay Couples in America

- Gays, Lesbians and Their Therapists: Studies in Psychotherapy
- The Joy of Gay Sex, co-authored with Edmund White
- The New Joy of Gay Sex, co-authored with Felice Picano (2<sup>nd</sup> ed)

He is best known for his presentation before the Nomenclature Committee of the American Psychiatric Association that led to the removal of homosexuality as a mental illness from the organization's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual.

<http://www.doctorsilverstein.com/>

Felice Picano, co-author is a poet and critically acclaimed author

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Felice\\_Picano](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Felice_Picano)

Line drawings are by acclaimed artist Joseph Phillips. Phillips is a gay American artist, known for his mainstream comic book art and for his work depicting gay life.

#### **9. Skill, competence and purpose of author:**

The authors cover a wide variety of sexual behaviors without trying to judge what people are interested in sexually. While they do refer to a wide variety of sexual practices, the dangers associated with the various behaviors are also covered. There is no endorsement of specific sexual behavior, merely provision of information on different types of sexual behaviors. Encyclopedic in format, it is an introduction with both bibliographical references as well as addresses and contact information for various organizations. The authors use of terminology reflects language used commonly by people in conversation, in film and in novels today.

#### **10. Attention of critics, reviewers and public:**

The Library Journal's reviewer noted the third edition has been expanded to include 30 new entries, and "strengthened coverage of cautionary topics while not stinting on pleasure". "The book is recommended for public libraries as the longest-running, most recent, and most comprehensive gay male sex manual, but librarians should also consider Jack Hart's Gay Sex, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed, which although dated, is especially strong on sex techniques...and includes many more web sites and more sex books in the bibliography."

Silverstein, Charles & Felice Picano (text) & Joseph Phillips (illus.). The Joy of Gay Sex. (Book Review). Martha Cornog. *Library Journal* 128.11 (June 15, 2003): p90(2). (202 words)

**Full Text:** COPYRIGHT 2003 Reed Business Information

3d ed. HarperResource: HarperCollins. 2003. c.336p. illus. index. ISBN 0-06-001273-0. \$24.95. PSYCH

Psychologist Silverstein and Picano, a published novelist and poet, have expanded this classic (first published in 1977 and last updated in 1993) with more than 100 pages and 30 new entries and

strengthened coverage of cautionary topics while not stinting on pleasure, fun, and games. They excel in their discussion of HIV, drags, and medical, social, and psychological topics; however, the attractive, erotic illustrations should have been supplemented by a few diagrams and charts. A lengthy resource section at the end features many organizational referrals but is less comprehensive for books and web sites--and is curiously light on books about gay sex. This book is recommended for public libraries as the longest-running, most recent, and most comprehensive gay male sex manual, but librarians should also consider Jack Hart's *Gay Sex* (2d ed.), which, although dated, is especially strong on sex techniques and variations and includes many more web sites and more sex books in the bibliography. Specialty manuals like Jack Morin's *Anal Pleasure & Health* and the "Ultimate Guide" series from Cleis Press are also suggested. And don't neglect lesbians--start with Felice Newman's *The Whole Lesbian Sex Book*--Martha Cornog, Philadelphia

**Named Works:** *The Joy of Gay Sex* (Book)

**Source Citation:** Cornog, Martha. "Silverstein, Charles & Felice Picano (text) & Joseph Phillips (illus.). *The Joy of Gay Sex*." *Library Journal* 128.11 (June 15, 2003): 90(2). *Expanded Academic ASAP*. Gale. Lewis and Clark Library. 27 Aug. 2008  
<<http://find.galegroup.com/itx/start.do?prodId=EAIM>>.

**Gale Document Number:** A104438728

The *Publisher's Weekly* review states that "Psychologist Silverstein and author-poet Picano make a notable attempt in this edition to define crucial elements of the changing sociopolitical landscape of gay men's lives in the early twenty-first century, but noted many entries "continued to feel sanitized, despite the authors' decision to use sexual slang and expletives. The review states "entries addressing issues such as domestic violence, gay liberation and civil rights feel out of place in a manual dedicated to the machinations of sexuality. "Readers may object to the title (which lacks the word "male"), the illustrations (which almost solely feature wiry, tattooed and hairless men) and some of the theories (the daddy/son scene) may be enjoying increased popularity owing to a "greater need for good parenting"), but this is nevertheless a needed title".

### **From Publishers Weekly**

Anal sex, Barebacking, Cruising-the ABCs of gay male sexuality get neatly presented here in an encyclopedic format with a savvy, knowledgeable attitude. A good number of the entries, though, seem unnecessary: perfunctory explanations of kissing ("an integral part of the entire experience of making love"), pornography ("the object is to turn you on") and phone sex ("use adjectives describing yourself and your favorite sexual scenes. If you don't know which words to use, watch a porn video and note those words that turn you on"), for example, will enlighten only the very inexperienced. Psychologist Silverstein and author-poet Picano make a notable attempt in this edition to define crucial elements of the "changing sociopolitical landscape of gay men's lives in the early twenty-first century" by including such topics as HIV "cocktail" treatments, bisexuality and transgenderism and the internet's role in helping fetishists connect. But many entries continue to feel sanitized, despite

the authors' decision to use sexual slang and expletives. Others need a dose of editorial Viagra to provide clued-in readers with the kind of candid, useful information they might be searching for. Entries addressing issues such as domestic violence, gay liberation and civil rights feel out of place in a manual dedicated to the machinations of sexuality complete with illustrations depicting everything from fisting to sex parties. Originally published in 1977, four years after the American Psychiatric Association reversed its decision labeling homosexuality a mental disorder, *The Joy of Gay Sex* continues to be a popular resource due to its "permissive tone about sex," an important feature and one that has been carefully retained in this revised edition. Readers may object to the title (which lacks the word "male"), the illustrations (which almost solely feature wiry, tattooed and hairless men) and some of the theories (the "daddy/son scene" may be enjoying increased popularity owing to a "greater need for good parenting"), but this is nevertheless a needed title. Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc. -- *\*\*This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.*

*\*\*The hard copy of the third edition is no longer in print, available only in paperback format.*

As noted, the title, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> editions has been in the Library's collection since 1993 and circulation statistics indicate an interest in the topic.

**11. Availability of materials at other institutions in the geographic area:**

Missoula Public Library has a copy of both the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> editions of the title in their regular circulating collection.

Following are search results conducted on WorldCat, a global catalog of library collections, for The Joy of Gay Sex:

The New Joy of Gay Sex second edition – owned by 251 libraries.

The Joy of Gay Sex third edition – owned by 313 libraries.

Missoula Public Library search under subject heading "sex instruction" – 98 titles; under subject heading "homosexuality" - 139 titles.

Bozeman – 57 titles under subject heading "sex instruction" including The In's and Out's of Gay Sex: A Medical Handbook for Men 1999. Under subject heading "homosexuality" – 69 titles

Flathead County – 55 titles under subject heading "sex instruction" including Sex Advisor: the 100 most asked questions about sex between men; under subject heading "homosexuality" - 63 titles.

Great Falls Public Library – 67 titles under subject heading "sex instruction; under subject heading homosexuality - 57 titles

Parmly Billings Public Library: 85 titles under subject heading "sex instruction", including Men are pigs but we love bacon: straight answers from American's most outrageous gay sex columnist; under subject heading homosexuality - 88 titles

**12. Authority**

Please refer to No. 8 above ; Published by a reputable publisher.

**13. Comprehensiveness and depth of treatment:**

The title is encyclopedic in format and sections are as intended. The subject matter covered is very comprehensive. The 3<sup>rd</sup> edition is expanded with 30 new entries and includes strengthened coverage of cautionary topics.

**14. Objectivity and integrity:**

The title includes many different aspects of sexual behavior for gay men without trying to condemn people for their sexual preferences. It is a well-rounded, encyclopedic guide to gay life. The authors are strongly against nonconsensual sex, caution against dangerous or life-threatening forms of sexual behavior.

**15. Clarity, accuracy and logic of presentation:**

The presentation of the material seemed clear to those on the Material Review Committee. Format is encyclopedic and includes a comprehensive index, as well as an appendix organized by subject that include lists of relevant organizations and bibliographies for each subject.

**16. Representation of challenging, though extreme or minority point of view:**

The intended audience for this title is gay men, and provides useful information to a minority group in the community. This is information (sex instruction) that the Library provides to other segments of the community. The Library Bill of Rights, which Lewis & Clark Library adheres to states that "materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval."