

PPFA And Sex—A Lasting Relationship
PPFA Eastern Region Meeting October 25, 2003
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I want to thank Jennifer Barefoot for the invitation to speak here today. I gave this speech at the Central Region meeting last month, but today's format is quite different (I have one-third the time and I am speaking to open rather than close the day) but my message isn't.

I have been asked to speak on "PPFA and Sex---A Lasting Relationship". Your mission leaving this meeting is to make it a lasting relationship, because it hasn't been. This will not be easy. PPFA has had enormous difficulties with sex, not unlike the American public. We have three basic problems to confront and let me be hyperbolic for a minute: sexuality is not part of our history, it's not clearly part of our historical mission and we have little credibility on the topic. I have deliberately overstated the challenges to get your attention this Saturday morning and to make a point. Attaining Goal One will be perhaps the hardest of our Vision 2025 Goals.

PPFA has put sex front and center in its Vision 2025.

The Vision states in its beliefs:

We believe that the free and joyous expression of one's own sexuality is central to being fully human.

The Vision then states that as a goal:

Planned Parenthood will ensure that sexuality is understood as an essential, lifelong aspect of being human and that it is celebrated with respect, openness, and mutuality.

This is not the first time that PPFA has addressed sexuality in its mission and policy statements. But the Mission statement is quite limited compared to Goal One.

The PPFA Mission Statement states that PPFA has a goal “to provide educational programs which enhance understanding of individual and societal implications of human sexuality.” PPFA has not one but two policy statements on sexuality education.

Goal One moves us from sexuality education to sexuality celebration. There is an interesting conflict isn't there with our assertion also of a right to privacy. Some people just don't feel like celebrating their sexuality. Or don't feel it is safe to, which I guess is part of the reason we have Goal One. Condolezza Rice is Exhibit A for this week. The Washington Post refused to publish this week the comic strip Boondocks, not an article but a comic strip, that alleged indirectly that Ms. Rice was gay. One character said that his simple and easy plan to save the world was to get Ms. Rice “laid”, and then goes on to assert that his plan isn't “sexist or chauvinistic”. It is hard to say whether the cartoon or the newspaper's reaction was more offensive. I guess the psycho-sexual instincts of our nation's leaders are off-limits, although it has certainly been written about from Hitler to Kennedy to Clinton.

I guess it is now our goal to make the Washington Post less queasy about printing comics that raise issues of human sexuality.

PPFA's traditional goal has been and is in the control of fertility business. That is what the first sentence of the PPFA mission statement says. So after Vision 2025 is PPFA now in the sexuality business and must the first sentence of the mission statement be changed? In what ways is sexuality important, or a prerequisite, to

the control of fertility mission? Is human sexuality important independent of our fertility control mission?

Without having had the pleasure of sitting in on your Vision 2025 meetings, I suspect that the inclusion of sexuality had a lot to do with a new understanding of and comfort with human sexuality being necessary to bring about the social change, especially in gender relations, that was my grandmother's original mission, and that this social change is necessary before women can control their fertility. And I know, and this is the subject of my upcoming book, that we are not going to see permanent political change in this country until we bring about social change first. A big part of the social change we seek is in accepting why humans are sexual beings.

So, PPFA is on the right train on the right track. It only took the better part of a century to get there. But we have yet to define the course our journey will take. As we proceed along the sexuality train, we can learn much from our experience over the past century.

When PPFA was founded by my grandmother in 1916, Victorianism was alive and well. Queen Victoria and Anthony Comstock may have been dead, but their spirits roamed the planet seeking to prevent any public outbreak of human sensuality, joy and rapture. Sensuality and sexuality, much less sex, were something that frightened the horses. Sexuality was not to be seen or talked about. It was certainly not something that was part of the original mission of PPFA. PPFA's mission, as articulated by my grandmother, was to give women control over their fertility with birth control.

This is in marked contrast to Margaret Sanger's personal mission. She was careful to distinguish the two. My grandmother saw that

changing sexual and gender attitudes and roles was a precondition to enabling women to control their fertility. She also thought, quite frankly, that women should enjoy sex just as much as men did, in or out of marriage. She was part of a coterie of early 20th century radical sex reformers who challenged male tyranny over sex, male control over society and the supremacy of marriage and the family as social institutions, believing that they codified male domination of women. My grandmother was one of the original feminists. She brought feminism into the bedroom and brought sex out of Comstock's gutter. She sought to liberate women sexually, socially and economically. My grandmother's goal was to smash the glass ceiling and replace it with a mirror over the bed.

The Victorian ethic, as pronounced by clergy and physicians, was that sex was to take place within marriage and for procreation, period.

Sex, marriage and reproduction were the holy trinity of human sexuality---all connected, insoluble and inseparable till death did the couple part.

Anthony Comstock stated that sex for pleasure within marriage was "bestial and base".

My grandmother's personal goal was to break up the holy trinity of sex, marriage and reproduction. She demanded sexual pleasure for women and end of sexual servitude. She believed that marriage was about relationships, not just reproduction, and that sex was about rapture not just pregnancy. And she believed that birth control could enable both. The celebration of Eros was my grandmother's religion.

When my grandmother was a young mother of two boys, my uncle and my father, she wondered how to talk to them about sex. She consulted with other mothers and eventually she put together a series of talks that she eventually gave to her children and to union women.

Several years before she began agitating for legalized birth control, my grandmother became one of America's first sex columnists. With only a nurse's education, she became a recognized authority on what was then called sex hygiene. Margaret Sanger wrote her sex manuals under threat of persecution by Comstock and his successors. She had to be careful. Thus she was less than candid in writing on her personal views of women's sexual enjoyment, premarital sex and abortion. She couched much of her writings in traditional, even Victorian terms. She wrote two series of articles, "What Every Mother Should Know" and "What Every Girl Should Know", which were among the first serious discussions about sexuality.

As historian Esther Katz describes it:

"They served as a primer on sexual hygiene and the birds and the bees for several generations of Americans. Both series appeared in the New York Socialist daily, *The Call*, from 1911 to 1913, and were republished in book form for more than fifty years. They seem rather straight-laced now, but few publications at the time included the type of frank language and explicit instruction about basic sex functions found in these articles. Especially in "What Every Girl Should Know", (my grandmother) tackled issues such as venereal disease and masturbation, which were seldom mentioned at the time outside of medical literature or were heavily bundled in euphemism".

When Dr. Thomas Hepburn, father of the actress Katherine, founded an organization in 1912 to tackle venereal disease, it was called the Social Hygiene Association.

”What Every Mother Should Know” included seven chapters that illustrated and yes celebrated the "sex function" in both the plant and animal world. Each chapter had a lead plant or animal: Mr. and Mrs. Buttercup, Mr. and Mrs. Toad, who "together go to the breeding pond," and Mr. and Mrs. Thrush, who did most of their "love-making at sundown in song".

My grandmother challenged the Victorian code of silence and prudishness and challenged Anthony Comstock, who had conflated sex with obscenity, by reintegrating sex with nature. Every animal has sex she said, but “Man is the only animal ashamed of (their sexual) instinct.” She demanded that mothers overcome their own prudish natures and talk openly with their children. Her message was to be relaxed, open and honest with one’s children in relation to sexuality.

My grandmother being a good budding feminist couldn’t resist in the last chapter of “What Every Mother Should Know” throwing in some historical information on the lesser status of women, that women historically were the legal property of their fathers and then their husbands and that how marriage entrapped women, but not men.

The first series, “What Every Mother Should Know” was timid, to say the least, about addressing human sexuality in any depth, and the editor, Anita Block, perhaps bombarded with questions from readers about buttercups and toads, requested a second series dealing specifically with coming of age issues for girls. “What Every Girl Should Know”, appeared in installments every Sunday

in The Call from November of 1912 to March 1913. My grandmother wanted to give girls and their mothers sex education, but, because of the Comstock laws, had to speak in code. She thus opened her series as a vice crusader, not for it, but against it. She tried to out-Comstock Comstock. She opened by offering her cure for prostitution and venereal disease:

“Students of vice, whether teachers, clergymen, social workers or physicians have been laboring for years to find the cause and cure for vice, and especially for prostitution . . . Upon one point they have been compelled to agree, and that is that IGNORANCE OF THE SEX FUNCTIONS is one of the strongest forces that sends young girls into unclean living.”

Ignorance of sex leads women astray into premarital sex, pregnancy, prostitution and venereal disease, argued my grandmother. My grandmother placed herself firmly in the abstinence until marriage camp. Her cure for the vices of premarital sex, VD and prostitution was to give comprehensive sexuality information, presented without "technicalities" or "my own ideals of morals." She wrote columns on girlhood, puberty, "sexual impulse," reproduction, "some of the consequences of ignorance and silence," and menopause. She discussed sexual anatomy, menstruation, virginity, pregnancy, abortion, masturbation and venereal disease in frank terms devoid of euphemism. She did not condone masturbation, pre-marital sex or legal abortion. There were only so many hills she was willing to climb.

As we know, sex sells newspapers, and Anthony Comstock bought each copy. My grandmother's explicit discussion of syphilis and

gonorrhea under a column headed "Some Consequences of Ignorance and Silence" was too much for the old man, and he had the Post Office ban The Call from the mails, forcing the editors to omit Sanger's column. They replaced the column with the following: "What Every Girl Should Know--- Nothing! By Order of the Post Office."

I don't know whether it was the discussion of VD that was the problem or my grandmother's simultaneous call for the overthrow of the capitalist system in this country. Comstock's ban was lifted several weeks later following public and political pressure, and The Call published the censored column. The article on venereal disease was distributed by the government to U.S. troops during World War I, with of course no credit to the author.

The birth control movement wasn't born in the Brownsville clinic in 1916; it was born three years earlier from Anthony Comstock's suppression of a sex education column on venereal disease.

Potter Stewart once said: "Censorship reflects a society's lack of confidence in itself." My grandmother's crusade in one sense was a campaign to get American society to trust women and female sexuality. To this end she founded PPFA. The link between PPFA and sex was not however, as Rick said to Capitaine Renault at end of "Casablanca": "the beginning of a beautiful friendship."

Over the course of a year after Comstock suppressed "What Every Girl Should Know", my grandmother evolved from a writer on sex and social hygiene to a rudimentary propagandist for a still unformed movement for women's sexual emancipation. What had happened in the interim was that Margaret Sanger took an extended and intimate sex tutorial from none other than Havelock Ellis, England's great authority on human sexuality and the author of the seven volume "Studies In the Psychology of Sex".

Ellis believed sex was an innate drive that could become repressed or distorted by culture. He, like Margaret Sanger, wanted to free humanity from taboos and ignorance. He wanted sex education to begin at an early age. He believed talking about sex and one's sexual problems would be a cure for whatever the problem was. Getting a problem out in the open was the first step and even the final step in the cure. In Ellis's view, patients should accept as normal whatever they did sexually. In contrast, Freud believed that patients had to change their unnatural ways. Thus Ellis accepted a wide variety of sexual practices that were then and now considered perverse. Ellis celebrated diversity from the sexual norm. He called sexual diversity is part of nature's balance. He believed strongly in the sexual freedom of women. Women were sexual beings not just reproductive ones. Women needed sexual fulfillment just like men. He recognized the sexual differences between men and women and said that men needed to pay attention and care to women's sexual needs.

Havelock Ellis and Margaret Sanger lived Ellis's creed. Their sexual practices were described in great detail in their letters back and forth to each other. They tested to the limits, and beyond, Ellis's thesis to redefine the normal and to celebrate diversity from the sexual norm. The more prurient among you can read all about it in Ellis's biography.

Even Ellis had his limits. While he said homosexuality was a genetic disposition and should be legally protected, both he and my grandmother were less tolerant of lesbianism, believing that women sought what they called "the society of Sappho", not for any genetic reason, because of their disgust with their degrading lives in a man's world.

My grandmother carried on a vigorous sex life with many men, and I believe a few women, over the years. She never had an all consuming relationship with one man. She kept her sex life private because she knew that publicity about her private life would destroy her career and her movement. She followed Tallulah Bankhead's maxim: "I've always maintained that sex is only the business of the three people involved."

American attitudes have not changed. Look at Arnold Schwarzenegger backtracking on his claimed sexual escapades even in California. My grandmother believed that the world needed not more restraint but more passion. I am reminded of what Cole Porter replied when asked what he thought of premarital sex: "It's fine, as long as it doesn't delay the ceremony." My grandmother was, as one of her many lovers, H.G. Wells, said, "A genuine pagan."

My grandmother knew that to advocate fertility control by contraception, rather than by abstinence, was to advocate for female sexuality and sexual expression. Birth control weakened the link between sex and procreation, altered the meaning of marriage and opened the way for premarital sex for women. Which raises the question, what was her primary goal---fertility control or the sexual liberation of women? Was it fertility control or breaking the holy trinity of sex, reproduction and marriage?

But Margaret Sanger chose not venereal disease or sex education but birth control as her cause. She did, however, return to sexuality education throughout her life. In 1926 she published "Happiness in Marriage", a marriage manual. The title is indicative of how careful she was of sex, at least on the cover. She positioned herself as advocate of birth control within marriage and advised consulting doctors on sexual matters. Nonetheless, one historian described her book as a "paean to sexual rapture".

My grandmother always believed that birth control would end enforced marriage and childbearing, which she called an “outrage upon women”. Women were not meant to be the “brood animal for the masculine civilizations of the world.”

One reporter said in 1930—“From time to time in remarks such as these Mrs. Sanger has let herself go and revealed a feminism so violent as to scare half her supporters out of their wits if they thought she meant it.”

In the 1930’s my grandmother created the Motherhood Advice Bureau which used form letters to answer inquiries on sex from women. My grandmother’s advice was traditional--- she said ‘sex belongs to love and love belongs to marriage’. In her clinic, the Margaret Sanger Research Bureau, she hired Abe and Hannah Stone, as her medical directors. In 1932 the Stones organized the first marriage counseling practice in USA. The Stones wrote a “Marriage Manual” in 1935—it became PPFA’s bible for decades and was a huge bestseller.

The marriage counseling services that began in 1932 at MSRB spread to the rest of PPFA’s affiliates slowly. The national office of PPFA had to negotiate with the psychiatric and social work professions who wanted to preserve control over content and personnel. My grandmother and PPFA tried to keep sex advice out of the hands of the psychiatrists and make sexual advice freely available to all. Psychiatrists initially opposed birth control clinics offering sex counseling, probably because they wanted to corner the market and a la Freud to change people’s ways. Psychiatrists initially demanded that each patient see a psychiatrist first before going to a PPFA counselor.

It took 15 years from 1932 to 1947 for PPFA to adopt what the Stones and the Margaret Sanger Research Bureau were doing. In 1947 PPFA announced its Marriage Education and Counseling Program. Sexual maladjustment was the point of departure for counseling. Despite this, PPFA did not separate birth control services from its marriage counseling. Sexual intercourse was the center of human sexuality, and birth control was a large part of the solution to whatever the sexual problem was.

PPFA published “The Clergyman Talks with the Bride and Groom about Family Planning”---a reprint of Hannah and Abe Stone’s marriage manual but edited by the clergy. While the manual called for women to achieve same sexual fulfillment as men, it assumed sex was for marriage. PPFA took its policy of only dealing with married women to extremes and refused to send another pamphlet “The Doctor Talks with the Bride” to unmarried women. PPFA did not want to be seen as promoting promiscuity. PPFA required its clients to be married and monogamous. At PPNYC old time staff members remember clients passing around the same engagement ring in order to get served.

Our blind spot about human sexuality came back to haunt us. In the 1960’s came the Pill. The Medical Committee took two years before it approved the Pill for its clinics. It took even longer for us to understand the implications of the Pill on the sex lives of our patients. The Pill, as Mary Calderone, the Medical Director of PPFA, said, allows humans to separate their sexual and reproductive lives. PPFA wasn’t sure what it thought about this. Mary Calderone, one old-time staff member said to me, “scared people at PPFA to death—she was so blunt about sex”. Dr. Calderone had to leave PPFA to found SIECUS.

This for Planned Parenthood was the equivalent of Boston selling Babe Ruth to the Yankees, except that we didn’t get \$100, 000 in

return or put on “No, No Nannette”. Mary Calderone was the Sultan of Sexuality, and she had to create a separate organization to promote sex education outside of Planned Parenthood. We couldn’t at that time deal with the fullness of human sexuality. I believe that PP’s attitudes about sex were exactly those of the general population. They had the same fears and moral judgments that most Americans held.

One old time national staff member told me: “PPFA avoided discussions of feelings toward sexuality that should have been faced. The politics of abortion were easier to package than the politics of sexual feelings. So we talked about abortion and choice and women’s right to choose, but not about her right to be sexual. The word ‘privacy’ became a catch-all for everything we would not talk about and explore”.

So, the our movement stepped back from women’s feelings and sexual needs, and instead focused on womens’ rights of choice and privacy. Euphemisms carried the day.

As the 60’s and 70’s progressed PPFA role as being the authoritative voice on sexual matters, inherited from my grandmother and Hannah and Abe Stone, was eclipsed by sex writers like David Reuben (Everything You Always Wanted To Know...), Alex Comfort (Joy of Sex), and later Dr. Ruth. Marriage manuals became sex manuals. Dr Ruth actually once worked at PPNYC. She claimed to have been fired by my predecessor Al Moran.

Various old timers at PPFA have described our approach as “keeping sex at arm’s length”. PPFA tried to be enlightened, but it was feigned enlightenment. In the 1970’s PPFA got into the fashion of sex desensitization where it would show old, tacky, grainy and not-so-grainy pornographic movies to staff, volunteers

to try to get them over whatever sexual hang-ups they had. The underlying purpose of the organization however was always birth control and pregnancy prevention. At one movie show in New Hampshire in the 1970's, a somewhat elderly female board chair was heard to remark after the climax of a sexual act that was probably still banned in Boston, "Well, at least she won't get pregnant."

PPFA moved carefully in the opposite direction to deal with sexuality as an entity in itself with the publication of "How To Talk To Your Child About Sexuality" in 1986. It may have earlier but I'll leave research that to the real historians. We should not confuse the impact of PPFA with Dr. Reuben, Dr. Comfort and Dr. Ruth and their colleagues. "How To Talk To Your Child About Sexuality" could not compete with "Everything You Always Wanted To Know About Sex But Were Afraid To Ask", which sold over 8 million copies. But it was a start.

PPFA has now moved to wanting to change society to understand sexuality as an essential lifelong aspect of being human and that it is celebrated. The social marketing campaign, "Real Life. Real Talk", has as a goal to support the development of healthy sexual attitudes and behaviors in America. It is an approach directly out of Havelock Ellis's playbook---talk about sex openly and all will be cured. But the sexuality portion of Vision 2025 has been justified, not by reference to Havelock Ellis, but by reference to the Surgeon General report "Call to Action on Sexual Health". One of the background papers to the Vision process details the dismal state of America's sexual health from unintended pregnancies, sexually transmitted diseases, to sexual dysfunction to discrimination and abuse against gays. For us disease prevention is still a major

justification of our work in sexuality, just as my grandmother said in 1911.

But Billie Avery told us that if PPFA could attain its sexuality goal, all the other goals would take care of themselves.

So, is sexuality a means to an end or an end in itself? What is sexuality all about within PPFA—a new mission, a new way to attain the mission. Is it about disease prevention and sexual health or something more?

Thanks to my grandmother and PPFA, the definition of sexuality has changed from the 19th to the 21st century, from reproduction within marriage in the 19th to emotional intimacy and physical pleasure for individuals, married or not, straight or not, young or old in the 21st. My grandmother and PPFA broke the holy trinity of sex, reproduction and marriage.

What are we putting in its place? Sexuality treated with respect, openness and mutuality is a good start. Sex and sexuality are a complicated business. I am struck by the many contradictions in our culture. Our culture embraces a Brittany Spears who goes around in public half undressed, sometimes with Madonna. Ms. Spears and Madonna certainly celebrate their sexuality openly and have gotten rich in the process. How many of our daughters will want to dress like Brittany Spears, even not on Halloween.

What is the U.S. Air Force Academy to do about all the sex, forced and otherwise, in contravention of military and civil law, that goes on in Colorado Springs? Not only is there an epidemic of rape, but there is one of pregnancy, intended and unintended, that is causing our nation to lose its best female pilots. And it's all about sex, sexuality and gender. The Air Force doesn't seem to understand

that putting 20 year olds in close quarters does not have to lead to rape, but it just might lead to sex.

What do we do about gay and straight men and women ignoring safe sex warnings, not using condoms and even with some gay men deliberately trying to get HIV. For some gay men being HIV positive is a badge of belonging. Is this a celebration of sexuality? For other gay men there is a HIV precaution burnout. Deliberately avoiding condom use is not a just a gay phenomenon.

A "sizable" number of college students have either tried to "talk their sex partners of the opposite sex out of using a condom" or have had a partner try to dissuade them from condom use, according to research published in the August 2002 issue of Archives of Sexual Behavior. The study surveyed more than 900 undergraduate students on their sexual history and condom use. Among the participants, 30% of men and 41% of women said they have had a partner try to dissuade them from condom use, while 17% of men and 14% of women admitted they have tried to convince a partner not to use a condom. In addition, those who "admitted" to trying to dissuade a partner from using a condom were "much more likely" to have had 10 or more sex partners, a finding that the study authors called "particularly troubling."

The study revealed, however, that women were "more successful than men" at both dissuading condom use and "resisting dissuaders' attempts," leading researchers to conclude that "women, not men, seem to dominate condom 'negotiation.'" The survey also found that although 93% of participants said they have used condoms, only 20% used them "consistently" and only 50% said they "always used them with a new partner." The reason men give for persuading or being dissuaded---we've all heard it before---sex feels better without a condom. Is this a celebration of

sexuality we can support? Do we celebrate sex only if it does not lead to disease or unintended pregnancy?

Our culture is sex saturated. Our Vision seems to want to make it sexuality saturated. Certainly we mean more than that. There is lots of unhealthy sex, but certainly we mean more by our Vision than making sex healthy. I believe that sexuality must be celebrated as part of our humanness and as part of our reproductive purpose. We all have a right to life and to pleasure and joy, and, if we choose, to reproduce. Sexuality is an essential part of the Darwinian sexual selection process. That is why sexuality is important. But evolution also provides a warning that we mess with it at our peril. Sexuality exists at one level to encourage reproduction.

But the traditional connection made since Cairo between feminism and healthy sexuality and fertility control is not a direct one. Women around the world in all kinds of cultures where they are repressed and often treated as no more than their father's or husband's property, have proved that they can control their fertility. Bangladesh is just one example. Healthy sexuality and gender equality is not a prerequisite for fertility control, even though they sure help.

For that reason we have always been about something more than fertility control. We have been more about women than men. Our culture and sexual wars are nothing new. Throughout history males have tried to define female sexuality, and more recently females have fought back trying to define male sexuality. Males, until recently, have won these battles since they traditionally controlled law, medicine and religion. I would guess that at the moment both sides think the other side has won. Historically, my grandmother sought to change the social and gender dynamic, whereas PPFA limited itself to dealing with women's sexual problems. Even so, my grandmother and Abe and Hannah Stone did not try to change

male sexuality. They tried to create some running room for women to express themselves sexually and to enjoy sex. My grandmother was also trying to remake the world by changing the gender dynamic and power imbalance between men and women. It was an unabashedly feminist viewpoint. Do we have the same goal? If so, what about the men?

Men make up half of the sexuality that we want to celebrate with respect, openness and mutuality. Or do we want to allow men to celebrate only that sexuality that women define and approve of? Sexuality cannot be divorced from power and the regulation of the sexual regime. Are we going to define norms of sexual behavior and an approved ideology of sexuality? Are we going to be the sex police? The Central Region heard about vile and perverse video games, such as “Duke Nukem”, that teenage boys play on their home computers, where they “kill” women on screen to get points. They heard, and you will hear today, a physician object in the strongest terms to women shaving or waxing their pubic hair as part of making themselves sexually attractive. Is PPFA going to try to set sexual norms for what people do in the privacy of their bedrooms at the same time as we tell government it has no place there?

PPFA is a woman’s organization, run by women for women, despite the presence of a few men on staff and in the board rooms. How is PPFA going to get the credibility it needs in order to deal with male sexuality? This is PPFA’s biggest problem with openly dealing with human sexuality. Remember this is not a new problem. Remember the titles of my grandmother’s articles in the New York Call: “What Every Mother Should Know” and “What Every Girl Should Know”. What about the fathers? And the boys? What do we have to tell them? This problem won’t be cured by adding a speaker at your next conference on male sexuality. Or even by hiring more distinguished males like Mike McGee, the

Federation's Vice President of Education, or David Meacham who organized this conference. This takes a culture change. PPFA has a culture just like our country does. In order to counteract our nation's Puritan culture, we have to change ours. And we have to dig a little deeper into what we really mean by human sexuality and we have to define what we want to get out of promoting and celebrating it.

I said at the beginning hyperbolically that we have three basic problems to confront: sexuality is not part of our history, it's not an obvious part of our mission and we have little credibility on the topic. So you have a lot of work to do to attain Goal One. So what to do?

First, we should talk openly about these problems. My grandmother had to write in code because of the threats from her opposition. Are we also writing and talking in code? I suggest that we need to get out of talking in code and address the questions I have raised among ourselves openly. I recognize, as my grandmother did, that there is a private and a public, but among ourselves, let's talk openly.

Secondly, face the questions I have raised. What do we really mean by our Vision 2025 statement on sexuality? What are we trying really to do and for whom? Do we have an approved sexuality? Should we be making norms of sexual behavior? Will we be making judgments on people? Is celebrating sexuality necessary for the social change we seek to bring about and how do we define that social change? Can we isolate a woman's sexual issues from a woman's societal and gender issues? Are we really proposing to celebrate male sexuality or are we trying to change it? Where will we get the expertise to address male sexuality? Can we remain a feminist organization if we include male sexuality? Are

ready to merge or affiliate with SIECUS to bring sexuality firmly within PPFA? These are some of the questions that you must wrestle with as you bring this vision about sexuality home.

Thirdly, answer the questions. We can answer these questions or finesse them. We do not have to answer them in order to continue advocating for comprehensive sexuality education and for sexual health. We probably do in order to advocate for gay rights and sexual pleasure for all. I suggest that we must be honest with our public as to our mission. We must also be honest with ourselves since it is inevitable that priorities must be set and hard funding decisions made. Every board of directors in this organization has a fiduciary responsibility to allocate funds and effort only to things within the stated mission of the organization. Mission clarity is therefore essential.

As you carry these discussions forward, remember the words of my grandmother. When asked by my cousin age 16 how often she should have sex, my grandmother responded without missing a beat: “Twice a day is about right”.

When I see that in Vision 2025, our work will be done.

I wish you the best of luck as you move your Vision 2025 goals forward.