

DISCUSSION | Mary Ercilia Gayen

Diagrams don't reveal sex mysteries

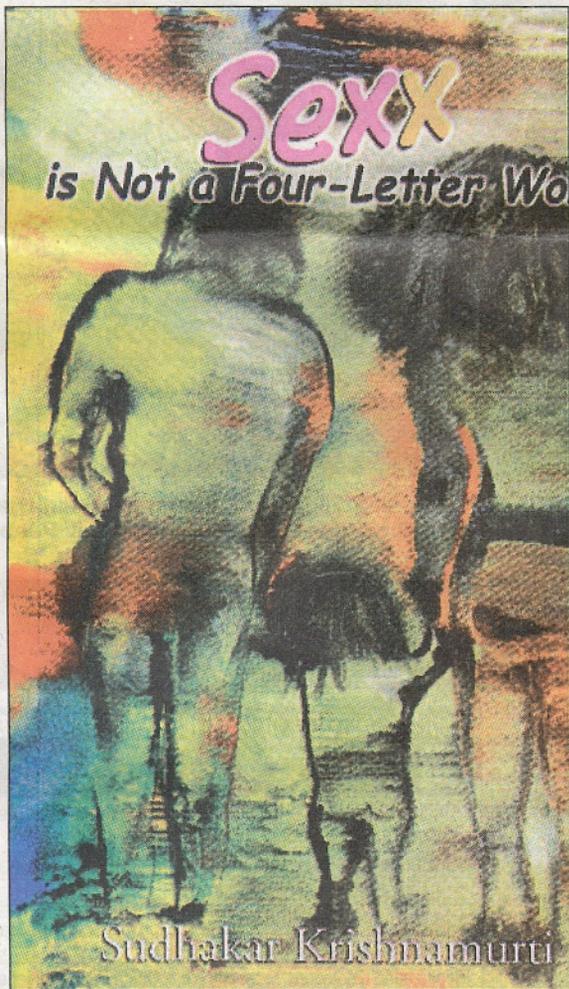
Hyderebad: The baffling, alarming and often hilarious attitude of Indians towards sex is interestingly brought out in *Sexx is Not a Four-Letter Word*, written by eminent andrologist Sudhakar Krishnamurti.

Though Indians are fascinated by sex, it is not a subject of free debate in the country.

As usual, Indians keep their ideas (or lack of them) about sex hidden. It is in this context that Krishnamurti's book assumes relevance.

His rational voice is refreshing in the midst of all myths, half-baked theories, strange surmises, unspoken fears and taboos which surround the subject. The book is also significant since it comes at a time when the Union education ministry is pondering how to impart sex education without attacking traditions.

"Sexual health is not the concern of an individual alone and has a bearing on society," Krishnamurti says in the book. "A



Sexx is Not a Four-Letter Word

By Sudhakar Krishnamurti

220 pages, Rs 95
Rupa Publications

"It is true that human sexuality in both sexes changes with age. It is now known that human beings are sexually active until very ripe old age, even in their eighties and nineties. This is nothing to be embarrassed or ashamed about. Geriatric sexuality is very real. Even the aged need love, and sex is but one avenue for its expression."

healthy sex life has a direct impact on the productivity of an individual." He tackles the tricky topic of sex education with humour and élan. Though he is a renowned physician, Krishnamurti avoids an academic staid tone and prefers to look at the funny aspect of things.

His patients appear as 'Mr Horny' and 'Mr Hitchcock' in the book and real-life accounts are presented with just the right touch of humour. It never degenerates into obscenity.

The undue stress given to machismo has made it difficult for Indian men to admit or get treatment for their sexual problems. Though obsessed with masculinity, most Indian men suffer from erectile dysfunction, says the book. The ignorance is so much that men are not even aware whom to approach in case of trouble. Urologists are often expected to do the task of an andrologist. Krishnamurti says that Indians need to have a radical attitude change towards sex if things are to get better.