

It's all in the mind

THIS ABOVE ALL

KHUSHWANT SINGH

The word andrology was new to me. *Blackinson's Medical Dictionary* defines it as "the science of diseases of the male sex, especially of those of the male reproductive organs". What gynaecology is for women, andrology is for men. Dr Sudhakar Krishnamurthy, an eminent sexologist (I beg his pardon, andrologist) and columnist based in Hyderabad, explains its various manifestations and remedies in a book full of humorous anecdotes aptly entitled, *Sex is not a Four-letter Word*. Indeed, it has only three letters which are permissible in polite society whereas its four-letter counterpart, which means the same thing, is not.

You can be sure when anyone writes about sexual maladjustments caused by impotence, hyperactive libidos, sizes of genitals, frequency of sexual encounters, quick ejaculations or no ejaculations and that sort of thing, it is assured of a large readership. In any event, we Indians are obsessed with sex for the good reason (according to the learned doctor-author) but in actual life we are not very good at it. At the end of the very first chapter is a highlighted item, "Take Home Message — "Impotence or erectile dysfunction (ED) is usually partial rather than total. Chronic impotence is more often physical than psychological. Many diseases, most notably diabetes and high blood pressure, can cause impotence. With the world's highest population and the world's highest prevalence of both diabetes and heart diseases, India is arguably the impotence capital of the world." It takes your breath away. Despite widespread impotence we breed like proverbial rabbits. Perhaps our men do not get as much fun out of sex as other nationalities do. We manage to impregnate our women-folk more frequently than others.

Some false notions persist among Indian males. One is about the size of their organs. The doctor assures that size makes marginal difference. The largest on record is eighteen inches long and six inches in circumference. Its owner was no good at it. It is how you use it that matters. Another is that masturbation is harmful. It has been established that it is natural and does no harm whatsoever. There are many other notions per-

petuated by the *Kama Sutra* addicts which need to be debunked.

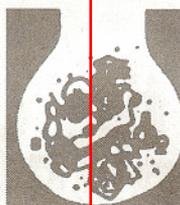
Other additions to my vocabulary are synonyms for what we know as male menopause. They are antropause, viropause, (Adam, Padam). These refer to a man past middle age who starts eyeing young girls and makes passes at them. Many respond — perhaps due to Electra complex (father-fixation). Both end up making laughing stocks of themselves.

I was curious to know how long does sex stay on one's mind. Dr Krishnamurthy assures me that men in their nineties are known to indulge in sex. I only fantasize about it. I no longer feel I am a dirty-minded old geyser.

→ The book makes good reading and is packed with useful information. ←

Take heart

Having handed over translations of my favourite Urdu poems to the publisher (I expect it to be on the bookshelves this month), there are still some words about which I am not very clear. On top of my list are *dil* (heart) and *jigar* (liver). To the best of my knowledge, they are not to be found in other Indian languages. I presume they came to Urdu from Arabic and/or Persian. *Dil* clearly stands for love; what does *jigar* signify? I have assumed it symbolizes passion or lust. They often overlap



when it is powerful emotion. Urdu poets use them as separate entities when they mean the same thing. I quote two couplets of Ghalib as illustrations:

*Dil say teyree nighaah jigar
tak uttar gayee
Ek hee adaa mein dono ko
razaamand ker gayee*

Your gaze travelled from my heart
down to my liver
And in one glance of its own fashion
Won over my love and my passion.

The second couplet runs as follows:



Gratify the senses

*Hairaan hoon dil ko ro-oon keh
peetoon jigar ko m
Maqdoor ho to saath rakhoon
nohagar ko m*

I am baffled! Do I mourn my heart
dem
Or the death of my liver?
If I had the means, I would hire a
professional mourner

Asad Mian, I too am baffled. Do
mourn my inability to understand
you or do I hire a professional trans-
lator who will do the job for me?

Cure for boredom

There are people
You love to meet
To converse with them
Is really a treat
But alas! In every society
There're plenty of persons
They can be termed
In number of versions.
With limited vocabulary
And poor sense of humour
They constantly torture us
Like a chronic painful
tum

You get tired
Of their dull monotone
Worse, very pointlessly
While they chat over
teleph
Your visitors start narrating
Their achievements over a
cup of co
And go on talking blah blah
Which is like a mini
autobiograp
There are also women-spec
Killjoy and deadly boring
At parties, even before
cracking a j
Burst into a hysterical
gigg
Take a tip from me
You won't be bored or tired
any
All that you're to do
Set a bore to bore the other
bore.

(Courtesy: Reeten Gangul
Tezpur)