

*your file on
sex ed.*

April 10, 1967

Mrs. Charlotte Schoen
45 Fairview Avenue
New York, N. Y. 10040

Dear Mrs. Schoen:

Thank you very much for your detailed comments on my lecture on sex education at the Federation of Jewish Philanthropies a week or two ago.

Your comments are well taken and thoughtful. I found much to interest me in them.

I should like to make clear that I have nothing against those who seek the life of kedushah as a way to mental health, provided that ultimately living practically the regimen of holiness leads them to transcend the quest for mental therapy and to seek spiritual fulfillment. However, to remain at that point whereby one merely uses religion as a tool for mental self-help is to be guilty of arrested development and subversion of the purpose of religion. I therefore find myself in agreement with Mr. Bradshaw concerning immediate methodology, but in ultimate terms, if you permit me to restate my position, mental health is a means to achieve kedushah and not the other way around.

Thank you for your comments about a sex education in the public schools, and your confidence in the quality of their efforts. I hope you will be proven right. My own feeling is that even if they perform their tasks to the best of their ability it will not really solve all our problems concerning the role of sex in life and the quality of life itself in this complicated, complex technopolitan society.

I very much enjoyed reading the sermonette by your daughter, and especially appreciate her quiet confidence in her Judaism and especially her modesty and yet strength in expressing her faith.

Kindest regards,

Cordially yours,

RABBI NORMAN LAMM

RNL/fz