

Preface

Content warning:

This publication can be shocking for some readers.

This book contains some 60 surveys or other researches, in which we look at the human. It is not always nice to see, and it is not necessary either for the reader to look at everything with one's own eyes. These researches have looked at the human on behalf of the reader, so that the readers will have at their perusal statistical data about how the life and thinking of quite ordinary people is like in the modern time, especially in topics related to sexuality. It is better to know than to assume.

These surveys were done mostly between 6 June 2022 and 8 July 2023, to collect background data for the book *Christian Sexology*, which observes from a broader and to some extent also theological perspective the topics, concerning which these surveys have collected statistical data. Due to the sensitive nature of the discussed topics, the surveys were published at such internet forums where people can write anonymously, so that people would dare tell things that they might not tell with their own name.

People's writings have often been shortened remarkably, so that the reader can briefly focus on the most essential content. Also copyright aspects are a reason why text is quoted only partially and not in full. People's texts have sometimes been corrected grammatically, and swear words or other clearly vulgar expressions have been replaced with a more neutral expression which has a similar meaning. If people's answers have sections in square brackets, they are comments added to this book, which are not part of the person's original message.

The documentation of these surveys offers links to the

discussions whose messages are quoted in this work, so the reader has the chance to study people's writings also in their original form and unabridged. In that case the style of the discussion is often remarkably vulgar and obscene, and the websites may contain links or advertisements of any kind of content, also of pornography.

Some discussions can only be read in their original form on the internet by registering as a user at the forum. Some of the discussions have been removed by the administrators. The documentation mentions such cases, which administrators have censored already before this work was published.

How reliably do such anonymous discussions at online forums reflect the thinking and opinions of the whole population? This is impossible to estimate. Several remarkable problems can be recognized. Sexuality is often a taboo and unwanted topic of discussion at such forums, where ordinary people discuss work, hobbies or life generally. These surveys were published mostly at such forums or departments of forums, which specialize in discussions about sexuality specifically. Such places can have a disproportionate number of visitors whose thinking is notably open and liberal. This can potentially mean that the opinions of the discussers are not statistically similar to the opinions among the general population.

In some discussions the forum administration has censored some of the answers, or even the entire discussion. We cannot know if the discussions have contained more comments by people, and what was said in them. Some discussers may have also been cautious not to tell their sincere opinion about the asked topic, if the person was worried that it might lead to sanctions from the forum administrators. Such reasons can also cause some opinions to be underrepresented in these statistics, compared to the reality.

Discussion about sexuality is rarely completely free from self-censorship. Even at anonymous forums, where people write with a nickname, many people protect the reputation of their nickname in the virtual community, and may therefore censor their opinions. An anonymous nickname is a member in a social community: it has a past, a future, and anonymous friends. One does not want to lose those friends, by having the wrong opinion about some topic.

I have managed to have the frankest discussions at such

internet forums, where people write completely namelessly, also without a nickname. Then a comment written by a person has no history or future of any kind: it is only a single message, which nobody can connect to any earlier or later message. In such circumstances I have been able to collect from people the frankest stories about their life and thinking.

Under such complete anonymity, it is not always possible to ensure that each person is counted only once in the statistics. Detecting the gender of the writers is also often uncertain, no matter if the person uses an established nickname or not. Gender of the writer can be a bit uncertain information sometimes, but the probability of mistakes should be so small that it has no significance for the margin for error of the statistics, which is affected by various problems in any case.

A quite significant problem concerning the reliability of the statistics can be such a phenomenon that persons who think in a specific way are notably enthusiastic to participate in discussions about a topic, but people with a different attitude refrain from participating in the discussion, because they deem the topic to be boring, unnecessary or objectionable. In this case, opinions of the enthusiastic discussers become overrepresented in the statistics of people's answers.

Despite the various problems concerning statistical reliability, I am convinced that every reader of this work will find something interesting, surprising, and possibly even shocking from the things that the mostly quite ordinary people have told about their life and sexuality, in the context of these more than 50 surveys and researches.