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HERPES AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

The liberal establishment media have discovered Herpes. You can read all about this incurable venereal disease in Time, Newsweek, the New York Times, and the Washington Post. You can even learn about it from television.

According to TIME and the Center for Disease Control, America now has 20 million sufferers of this incurable disease, and the number is growing at a half million a year. Observers of media bias should explore the question, Why did herpes become national news only after 20 million Americans got it? Why weren't those people warned in time to avoid the contagion?

How could a disease afflicting such massive numbers of people be kept out of establishment media channels while those tremendous figures were building up? The media are constantly reporting on ailments that affect only a tiny fraction of that number.

Three years ago, this writer described the symptoms and the danger in a syndicated newspaper column and issued a strong warning. At that time, "only" five million Americans had contracted the disease. Yet, the establishment liberal media didn't discover the epidemic until 15 million sufferers later. Why?

The title and subtitle over the seven-page Time magazine article are very revealing: "The New Scarlet Letter: Herpes, an incurable virus, threatens to undo the sexual revolution." Those words show why herpes has been a no-no subject in the liberal media for so long, and why the liberal media are so upset today.

The sexual revolution swept over the United States in the 1960s and 1970s, bringing changes more profound and far-reaching than other upheavals such as war or depression. We were told that religious and moral codes were out of date if they kept sex away from children and confined it to the bonds of matrimony, and that the modern person should be liberated from such obsolete restrictions. We were urged to talk openly about sex on television and in classrooms. We were told that "normal" lifestyles include fornication, adultery, and homosexuality.

The pill, pornography, and Planned Parenthood were the watchwords of sexual

liberation. Kinsey and Masters & Johnson told us "everybody's doing it," Playboy and Penthouse made it chic, the pill manufacturers assured us it was safe, and Planned Parenthood assisted children to do it in their early teens. You were out of step if you weren't "sexually active," the new euphemism for fornication.

In the pre-liberation era, three powerful deterrents operated against promiscuity: illegitimate pregnancy, venereal disease, and society's scorn. In the era of the sexual revolution, the contraceptive manufacturers supposedly eliminated the first, antibiotics supposedly eliminated the second, and the third was supposedly eliminated by spectator sex on television and such financially successful slicks as Playboy and Penthouse.

Then the scourge of herpes hit with a vengeance and disproved all the assumptions of those who assured us that sex with anyone, anytime, is okay just so long as you avoid pregnancy. Herpes is incurable, lifetime, painful, irritating. Its recurring, painful blisters in the genital area provide telltale evidence just like the "scarlet letter."

Herpes even perpetuates the ancient double standard in sex: women pay a bigger price than men. Herpes is more painful to women and, additionally, may be fatal or disastrous to a future baby. Herpes is lethal to 60% of infected newsborns, and half of those who survive suffer blindness or brain damage.

Some articles are trying to minimize the fear of herpes by claiming that this virus has been around since ancient days. But it's obvious that the reason it is epidemic today is the tremendous growth of sexual "activity." According to Time magazine, the rise of homosexuality and oral sex are other reasons.

Can't you have your sexual freedom by just asking the other party if he or she has herpes? Don't count on it. Many of the current articles tell of herpes sufferers who become so angry that they deliberately set out to infect as many others as possible, and even brag about how many they have infected. Time magazine tells that many herpes counselors advise their patients to keep their disease a secret at the start of a new sexual relationship.

One leading herpes researcher says that "the truth about life in the United States in the 1980s is that, if you are going to have sex, you are going to have to take the risk of getting herpes." But the old rules of chastity and fidelity just might be the solution.