# Contents

About the Author  xi  
Foreplay  xiii  
List of Illustrations  xv  
List of Text Boxes  xxv  
List of Tables  xxvii  
About the Companion Website  xxix  

1  **Theoretical Perspectives on Human Sexuality**  1  
   Introduction  2  
   What Drives Us to Have Sex?  2  
     Psychological Influences  2  
     Cultural and Societal Influences  3  
     Biological and Evolutionary Influences  6  
   Major Theoretical Perspectives on Human Sexuality  8  
     Psychoanalytic Theory  8  
     Cognitive-Behavioral and Learning Theories  10  
     Exchange Theories  14  
     Personality Theories  15  
     Evolutionary Theory  18  
   The Perspective of This Text  20  
   Key Terms  22  
   Discussion Questions: What is Your Perspective on Sex?  22  
   References  22  

2  **Sexology Research: History, Methods, and Ethics**  26  
   Introduction  27  
   A Brief History of Sexology  28  
   Sexology as a Science  31  
   Sample Selection  32  
   Nonexperimental Research  33  
     Surveys  33  
     Direct Observation  37  
     Case Reports  41  
   Experimental Research  42  
     A Sample Sexperiment  42  
     Strengths and Limitations of the Experimental Method  43  
   A Note on Statistics  43  
     Means and Medians  43
| Social Interactions and Norms | 126 |
| Physical Environments | 128 |
| Media | 128 |
| Variations in Gender Expression | 130 |
| Transsexualism | 130 |
| Cross-Dressing | 136 |
| Other Identities | 137 |
| Just How Different Are Men and Women? | 137 |
| Sex Differences in Psychology | 138 |
| Sex Differences in Sexuality and Attitudes Toward Sex | 138 |
| Key Terms | 140 |
| Discussion Questions: What is Your Perspective on Sex? | 140 |
| References | 140 |

6 **Sexual Orientation** | 145 |
| Introduction | 146 |
| Sexual Orientation: Definitions and Types | 146 |
| Measurement and Prevalence | 147 |
| Theories of Sexual Orientation | 150 |
| Early Psychological Theories | 151 |
| Biological and Hormonal Theories | 151 |
| Evolutionary Theories | 153 |
| Biopsychosocial Theories | 155 |
| Sex Differences in the Expression of Sexual Orientation | 158 |
| Sexual Orientation Attitudes | 161 |
| Prejudice Against Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Persons | 161 |
| Sexual Orientation in Psychological Perspective | 166 |
| Sexual Orientation Myths | 167 |
| Key Terms | 170 |
| Discussion Questions: What is Your Perspective on Sex? | 170 |
| References | 170 |

7 **The Laws of Attraction** | 175 |
| Introduction | 176 |
| What Attracts Us To Other People? | 176 |
| Affective Influences | 177 |
| Propinquity | 179 |
| Similarity | 181 |
| Scarcity | 183 |
| Physiological Arousal | 184 |
| Neurochemical Factors | 185 |
| Physical Attractiveness | 185 |
| Other Factors Involved in Attraction | 187 |
| Attraction Processes among Gay Men and Lesbians | 188 |
| Why Are Men and Women Attracted to Different Characteristics? | 189 |
| Evolutionary Theory | 189 |
| Social Structural Perspectives | 192 |
| Key Terms | 195 |
| Discussion Questions: What is Your Perspective on Sex? | 196 |
| References | 196 |
8 **Intimate Relationships: Sex, Love, and Commitment**  200  
  Introduction  201  
  Singlehood and Casual Relationships  201  
    Sexuality Among Singles  201  
    Hookups  203  
    Friends with Benefits  204  
    Singles’ Sexual Outcomes  204  
  Love and Committed Relationships  207  
    The Nature of Love  207  
    The Nature of Commitment  212  
    Varieties of Loving and Committed Relationships  214  
  Why Do Some Relationships Succeed While Others Fail?  220  
    Characteristics of Good Relationships  220  
    The Dark Side of Relationships  223  
    Coping with Breakup  229  
  Key Terms  229  
  Discussion Questions: What is Your Perspective on Sex?  229  
  References  230

9 **Sexual Behaviors**  235  
  Introduction  236  
  Solitary Sexual Behaviors  236  
    Asexuality and Celibacy  236  
    Sexual Fantasy  238  
    Masturbation  241  
  Partnered Sexual Behaviors  246  
    Kissing  246  
    Touching  248  
    Oral Sex  248  
    Vaginal Intercourse  249  
    Anal Sex  250  
    Same-Sex Behaviors  251  
    Sex With Three, or Four, or More  252  
  Frequency and Benefits of Sex and Orgasm  255  
  Sexual Behavior in Psychological Perspective  257  
    Self-Regulation  257  
    Attachment Style  259  
    Mortality Salience  259  
  Key Terms  260  
  Discussion Questions: What is Your Perspective on Sex?  260  
  References  260

10 **Lifespan Sexual Development**  265  
  Introduction  265  
  Sexual Development From Infancy Through Adolescence  267  
    Infancy and Childhood  267  
    Puberty  268  
    Adolescence  270  
  Biopsychosocial Influences on Teenage Sexual Activity  273  
  Implications of Early or Late Sexual Development  274
Contents

Sexuality and Aging 277
  Biopsychosocial Influences on the Sexual Activities of Older Adults 281
Key Terms 283
Discussion Questions: What is Your Perspective on Sex? 283
References 283

11 Sex Education, Contraception, and Pregnancy 287
Introduction 288
Sex Education 288
Sex Education in Cross-Cultural Perspective 293
Contraception 294
  History 294
  Types of Contraceptives 295
  Choosing the Right Contraceptive 303
Pregnancy 304
  The Psychology of Trying to Have a Baby 305
  Psychological Changes During Pregnancy and After Birth 306
Abortion 306
Key Terms 307
Discussion Questions: What is Your Perspective on Sex? 308
References 308

12 Sexually Transmitted Infections and Safer-Sex Practices 312
Introduction 313
Sexually Transmitted Infections 313
  Bacterial Infections 314
  Viral Infections 317
  Other Infections 322
Factors That Increase the Spread of STIs 323
  Biological 323
  Psychological 324
  Social and Environmental 326
The Psychological Impact of STIs 327
  Implications for Romantic and Sexual Relationships 328
Preventing Infection 329
Key Terms 332
Discussion Questions: What is Your Perspective on Sex? 332
References 332

13 Sexual Dysfunction and Sex Therapy 336
Introduction 337
Causes of Sex Difficulties 337
  Biological 337
  Psychological 338
  Social 341
Types of Sexual Dysfunction 342
  Desire Problems 342
  Arousal Problems 344
  Orgasm Problems 346
  Pain Disorders 347