

with each succeeding generation. When are we going to set priorities that acknowledge human needs? When are we going to learn how really to communicate?

Of course, what is a teenage manual without sex? Sex is still one of the most bewildering areas for a teenager in our society, caught as she/he is in that ambiguous area between child and adult, in possession of a full-fledged sex drive with no acceptable outlets. What is an essential and healthy part of every teen's life is virtually denied by the establishment, perhaps in the misguided hope that if it is not acknowledged it will somehow go away.

Teens pick up remarkably early that parents are uncomfortable with sexuality and consequently take the

behind-the-barn approach; they rely on friends' experiences for enlightenment or, worse, just hope for the best. Here is an entry from a teen's diary: "A very important issue is weighing on my mind. Can a person get pregnant without doing it? Specifically, can sperms travel through underpants? If you get them on your hand and touch yourself, can they swim up you? When two people lie close together, can they seep through from one to the other? What about if you swallow them?"

There is an epidemic of teenage single parents in our decade. We can tell our children that we have 650 muscles in our body, about 206 bones, over 100 joints, 60,000 miles of arteries, veins, and capillaries, thirteen billion nerve cells but somehow, when it comes to talking

about emotions and sexual attractions, we are at a loss for words.

Books like *Teenage Romance* or *How to Die of Embarrassment* help us to keep in touch with the younger generation. What can we do to alleviate the painful transition to adulthood? Granted, there is an evolutionary purpose for personal and social disequilibrium. It provides the impetus for change, the need to examine and redefine roles and relationships in an effort to create a healthier society. But true revolutions occur from the inside out. Instead of dissecting frogs (yuch!) let us concentrate on baring our souls to one another, sharing those feelings that are common to each and every one of us. I guarantee we could learn a lot more about love and life and forego a lot of unnecessary embarrassment.

GIRLS TURNING WOMEN

Frances Davis

lifting a single foot among rushes
listening for leap of enemy or prey
like shorebirds carving naked silhouettes
against the less courageous outlines of the day
girls turning women hood their eyes to see
where bubbles rise from secrets in the cells
and where the deeps lie waiting for the chill
reminders of the savagery of selves

here at the estuary of one life
stalking the cold beaches of another
fine fierce and terrible their pride and greed
pressing their thirsty lips to time, their lover

shattering expectation as they fly
all mystery and death-defying cry