Sexual daydreams were measured using the Imaginal Processes Inventory, while retrospective data on number of coital partners, frequency of intercourse in early marriage, and quantity of sexual activity experienced between 20 and 40 years of age were obtained by interview. The 277 men studied ranged from 24 to 91 years. The frequency and intensity of sexual daydreams declined with increasing age, and after age 65 virtually disappeared. The occurrence of sexual daydreams varied directly with each of the three behavioral indicators of sexual vigor for all age groups through age 64. The results are seen as supportive of the "current concerns" explanation of daydreaming production.

KEY WORDS: sex; aging; daydreams; male sexuality; gerontology.

INTRODUCTION

Epstein and Smith (1957) and Leiman and Epstein (1961) reported a direct relationship between sexual responses on a thematic apperception test and weekly orgasmic frequency for college males. These authors interpreted their findings as indicating a direct relation between sexual drive and sexual fantasy. Klinger (1971), however, interpreted their findings as resulting from the operation of the current concerns of the subjects, an interpretation not needing a reference to drive level. Leiman and Epstein (1961) also found that as sexual deprivation increased, mean thematic sexual responses increased for low-guilt subjects and decreased for high-guilt subjects. Klinger (1971) explained this result by attaching to sexual incentives a positive sign with low guilt and...
negative sign with high guilt, with deprivation increasing the strength of the incentives. Thus, Klinger explained the guilt × deprivation interaction by reference to "current concerns." Hariton and Singer (1974) found among women that sexual fantasies and daydreams (1) were common during intercourse, (2) increased sexual desire and pleasure, and (3) were unrelated to neurotic daydreams and problems of relationship, competence, or enjoyment of sexual activities. Thus sexual fantasies and daydreams seem to be a common part of the sexual activity of young adults. The present study analyzes retrospective reports of sexual daydreaming and their relationship to three behavioral aspects of the sexual history of adult males over the complete adult life span.

**METHOD**

**Participants**

A total of 277 males from 24 to 91 years of age participated. These males were part of the Baltimore Longitudinal Study of the Gerontology Research Center of the National Institute on Aging of the National Institutes of Health. The men were divided into six age groups, as follows: 24-34 (n = 23), 35-44 (n = 27), 45-54 (n = 56), 55-64 (n = 83), 65-74 (n = 48), and 75-91 (n = 40). The men were predominantly middle- or upper-middle-class whites, with 88% having some college and 46% with a master's or doctoral degree. Less than 10% were either black or other than middle class and seldom both black and non-middle class. All were volunteers in a program which asks participants to return to the Gerontology Research Center for retesting every 12-24 months.

**Procedure**

Aspects of daydreaming and related mental activity were measured from participant responses to a 344-item retrospective questionnaire (*The Imaginal Processes Inventory*, copyright 1966, revised 1970) developed by J. L. Singer and J. S. Antrobus. These items refer to the content and structure of daydreaming derived from examples in the literature and interview/clinical examples. Instructions on completing the questionnaire and a brief explanation of daydreaming were given to participants in small groups. The questionnaire itself was usually completed during the evening while the participant was in the privacy of his room. Three percent refused to complete this questionnaire. Sexual Daydreaming is measured by Scale 19 of the Imaginal Processes Inventory. The 12 items of this scale are presented in Table I. Each item has five options representing points on an implied continuum. The options were "definitely not true," "usually not true," "usually true," "true," and "very true for me." These