The period of late modernity is characterised by the individualisation of patterns of interaction involving a sexual component and the plurality of available cultural scenarios (Giddens, 1991). Conceptualised as “the instructional guides that exist at the level of collective life” (Gagnon & Simon, 1984, p. 53), these scenarios provide resources for the construction of individual and collective identity in the process of socialisation. Under the circumstances of increasing individualisation and the attendant insecurity and unpredictability, social actors have to make constant choices in almost every sphere of their lives. Cultural scenarios, which multiplied as a result of the processes of modernisation, are an important factor in making these decisions, as they provide elements for the construction of individual biographical narratives. Modernisation brought about changes that are particularly apparent in the domain of sexuality (Giddens, 1992). They involve not only a growing social acceptance of cohabitation and pre-marital sex, and a gradual liberalisation of attitudes to non-heteronormative sexualities, but also a more positive approach to the body, sexual pleasure and the idea of partnership (Lew-Starowicz, 1999), which is particularly important in the context of sexuality of young people.
The social understanding of sexuality

In general understanding, sexuality is most often defined using biomedical categories. According to the guidelines of the World Health Organisation, sexual health should be approached as “a medical norm with regard to sexuality” (Lew-Starowicz & Długołęcka, 2006, p. 132). Today, medical norms are relatively stable and appear in a number of official documents, such as the International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems (ICD) (Lew-Starowicz & Długołęcka, 2006). This classification sets the limits of sexual behaviour, relations and preferences considered as a medical norm, and sanctions treatment in cases that are beyond it. The understanding of sexuality from a social perspective is somewhat different.

It is not really possible to quote a uniform definition of sexuality that would be generally accepted in social sciences. According to one such proposal, sexuality can be understood not only as “sexual practices but also sexual identities and varied historical and cultural forms which sexual identities and practices can take. (…) Sexuality is simultaneously variable bodily states, desires and physical practices, and also culturally variable understandings of this embodiment and its meanings” (Holland et al., 1998, p. 23). As can be seen, the understanding of sexuality only in terms of sexual intercourse – which is predominant in our (heteronormative and patriarchal) reality – is a considerable oversimplification and does not give justice to the complexity of the phenomenon.

Moreover, this tendency to oversimplification is also apparent in the reductionist assumption that sexuality is essentially binary. Indeed, the use of binary oppositions in the discourse¹ about sexual life is quite common, including such terms as “normal” vs “deviant”, “psychological and social” vs “natural and biological”, “nature” vs “culture”, “individual” vs “society”, “freedom” of choice vs “control” from above (Archard, 1998; Giddens, 1992; Waites, 2005; Weeks, Holland, & Waites, 2003). What is perceived as a factor of individual sexuality (e.g. character, individuality, identity) is often set against cultural and social norms, principles, etc. and juxtaposed with the social environment of the individual (Weeks, 2010).

Since such comparisons tend to be normativised, in the course of socialisation we get to know what is “better” and “worse”. As a result, the elements of sexuality (including, most

¹ Discourse is understood as “a set of meanings, metaphors, representations, images, stories, statements and so on that in some way together produce a particular version of events. It refers to a particular picture that is painted of an event (or person or class of persons), a particular way of representing it or them in a certain light” (Burr, 1995, p. 32).
importantly, the socially expected appearance, behaviour and even emotions, cf. Foucault, 1978, 1985, 1986) are discussed using the established socio-historico-cultural value orientation categories. In Poland, these categories seem strongly naturalised, particularly with regard to the sexuality of non-adults. In the context of change in the sphere of social norms, the issues of broadly understood youth² sexuality are becoming a particularly important subject of discussion. Social surveys indicate that a growing number of young people engage in sexual behaviour at an increasingly younger age (Instytut Badań Edukacyjnych, 2015; Izdebski, 2012; Wróblewska, 2007).³ This is often combined with inconsistent use of contraception (Centrum Badania Opinii Społecznej, 2007; Izdebski et al., Niemiec, & Wąż, 2011), which makes such behaviour risky. In view of the situation, there is a need to provide young people with knowledge about the dangers and consequences of beginning sexual activity.

**Sources of knowledge about sexuality**

Since almost a quarter of Poles are disappointed about the way sexuality issues are discussed in the country (Kasperek & Piorunek, 2001), it is hardly surprising that an overwhelming majority of society is in favour of sexuality education at schools. For several years, survey results have indicated a consistent level of support to such a school subject at about 90% (Izdebski, 2012). However, what tends to be inadequately addressed in public discourse is the importance of holistic sex education, which is based on the assumption that the process of sexuality education should begin at the stage of primary socialisation, i.e. before the child goes to school. It follows that the first agents involved should be the closest family (Izdebski et al., 2011). This underlying assumption of sexual socialisation corresponds to the expectations of young people, 72.9% of whom think that it is family members that should transfer knowledge about sexuality (Izdebski et al., 2011). Still, the reality of communication between children and parents in matters of sexuality is most often quite different. To a great extent, this situation can be attributed to the social context, which is not necessarily conducive to open conversations about sexuality and to educational effort in this respect.⁴

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² As used here, the terms “young people” and “youth” refer to people in the socially constructed transitional phase between childhood and adulthood, i.e. to both the period of early adolescence (11–16 years of age) and late adolescence (16–19 years of age) (Kurzępa, 2009, p. 21).
³ This includes beginning sexual activity by children below the age of consent, which in Poland is fifteen years (see Woynarowska, 2015).
⁴ Although the Catholic cultural scenario is certainly an exception to the rule, it is most often incompatible with the choices and needs of young people in the late modern age (see Woźniak, 2015).
This begs the question of the actual sources of young people’s knowledge about sexuality. A study conducted by Zbigniew Izdebski reveals that in 2004 most of them identified their peers as the key source of such information (69.5%), followed by books (42.5%), newspapers and magazines (33.3%), television (31.5%), teachers (20.8%) and classes in the school subject called Family Life Education (wychowanie do życia w rodzinie) (13.4%) (Izdebski et al., 2011). The youngest group of respondents also mentioned the Internet. Although at that stage it was only beginning to gain popularity in Poland (as Telekomunikacja Polska had launched its flat-rate permanent Internet connection service called Neostrada only three years before), it was already a source of such information for about 15% of those questioned.

According to a study commissioned a decade later by the Ministry of National Education and conducted by the Educational Research Institute on a representative sample of 1,246 eighteen-year-olds (Instytut Badań Edukacyjnych, 2015), peers and friends were still the most popular source of knowledge about sexuality among young people (56%). What can be interpreted as a potentially positive change is an increasing role of the family (39%) and teachers teaching classes in Family Life Education (38%), assuming that such knowledge was reliable and appropriate for the children’s age. In both cases the key factor at play is the quality of information, which can be verified according to generally accepted international standards adopted by the World Health Organisation (WHO Regional Office for Europe & Federal Centre for Health Education, 2010). In the case of teachers, it is possible to develop a framework and guidelines for a unified and universally applied teaching programme and to execute its implementation according to the accepted criteria. On the other hand, evaluation of private family conversations and intervention in their informative content seems hardly possible. Consequently, although the increasing role of family and school as a source of young people’s knowledge about sexuality could be a really positive development (as it may indicate improving family relations and inter-generational dialogue), it cannot be evaluated as unequivocally beneficial since it is impossible to assess the quality of information which is transferred.

The results of the study under consideration (Instytut Badań Edukacyjnych, 2015) also feature the informant’s partner (27%), a category that did not often appear in similar studies before. This comes as important information on the sources of knowledge about sexuality, as well as on social change. What should be investigated in more detail is the relations between young people, particularly the opportunities and risks involved in the level of trust they have in their partner at such a young age, and the impact of this trust on change in the patterns of behaviour among young people.
Another important source of information on sexuality issues is the Internet (forums, information portals, Wikipedia, blogs), used for these purposes by 36% of the informants. At the same time, one in five of those questioned identified the Internet as the source which provided them with the largest amount of such information. Importantly, this finding indicates that it is necessary to make a distinction between the level of popularity of particular sources of information on the one hand, and the actual quantity and, most importantly, quality of information they provide on the other.

What is more, internalisation of knowledge available from different sources tends to be an individualised process. Since both information and the form in which it is acquired from particular sources is not fixed or uniform, knowledge is subject to the process of assimilation conditioned by the social context. (Another factor at play is variables within the same source, e.g. Family Life Education classes are taught differently in different schools, different peers have different information, etc.) One way of gaining an insight into this diversity is to analyse retrospective narratives. Consideration of cultural scenarios of sexual behaviour, in turn, can lead to a better understanding of knowledge acquisition about sexuality in the Polish context.

A source of knowledge: the family

As stressed above, in the period of early childhood significant others, most often family members, have the greatest impact on the formation of children’s sexuality: “From birth, babies learn the value and pleasure of bodily contact, warmth and intimacy” (WHO Regional Office for Europe & Federal Centre for Health Education, 2010, p. 15). However, in the next stages of development most parents do not raise the subjects relating to human sexuality with their children (Centrum Badania Opinii Społecznej, 2007; Izdebski, 2012; Kurzępa, 2009). The analysis is based on the findings of the first stage of a research project conducted by the author. The survey involved 38 in-depth interviews with a purposive non-probability sample of 17 young males and 21 females, recent graduates of upper-secondary schools aged between 18 and 22. The interviews were conducted in 2014 and 2015 in the Tricity (Gdańsk, Sopot, Gdynia) and Warsaw. Most of the informants described themselves as heterosexual or homosexual; other identities included pansexual (one) and bisexual (two). The interviews were retrospective and concerned the modes of negotiating and constructing the informants’ sexuality with reference to the sources of their knowledge about sex issues. The anonymised data are coded as follows: Interview 1–17: Males (Int. 1–17 M), Interview 18–38: Females (Int. 1–17, F), with the age noted in both cases (e.g.: Int. 18, F, 21).

The results of quantitative studies reveal that such conversations were held in the respondents’ families, but do not provide the most important information, i.e. what it was like, whether the respondents found the information exhaustive, and whether this information met their subjective needs as a young person.
Consequently, the process of sexual socialisation tends to be random and accidental (Izdebski, 2012). Conscious avoidance of the subject of sexuality results in the transmission of a cultural scenario in which corporeality and sex are associated with something that is not meant to be talked about, a social taboo. Structured knowledge about sexuality is even more important considering the fact that young people reach intellectual and sexual maturity at an increasingly younger age, while their emotional maturity often develops longer (Moczuk, 2004).

The informants taking part in the study provided different reasons for the fact that they did not talk about sexuality with their parents. These reasons fall into three major categories, the first of which involves reluctance on the part of the informants themselves. Interestingly, during the interviews they often avoided the word “sex” and used colloquial expressions referring to sexual intercourse instead. They tended to stress that the knowledge about “those things” that they had acquired on their own was sufficient, which is why they did not think it was necessary to talk about issues of sexuality with their parents.

In the second category there were no conversations about sex because the relations with parents were not conducive to raising the subject. This avoidance often stemmed from the fear of anti-sex paranoia or hysteria, which perceived sex that was against the accepted norms as a threat to the physical and mental health of the individual on the one hand, and to the security of other members of society, or the broadly understood social order, on the other (Kochanowski, 2013, p. 18). In this case, information acquired from other sources was different than, or even at odds with, the cultural scenarios offered by the parents. This category was conceived mostly on the basis of narratives of informants with non-heteronormative sexual identities. As explained, they most often decided to avoid talking about sexuality with members of their families, as they were convinced that their parents would have stressed the only acceptable model, i.e. heterosexual, monogamous, and (less often) marital (not necessarily procreative).

The third category was distinguished on the basis of narratives in which the parents were too ashamed to talk about sex. This points to the cultural tabooisation of sex and identifies sexuality as something that should engender shame and embarrassment. As a result, the most commonly adopted strategy was to transfer responsibility for sex education of their children to some unspecified agents of socialisation: “I think it’s all impersonal, like;
I mean pushing things off; I mean that parents don’t want to talk to their kids about sex; they say ‘I don’t know how to do it’, or ‘I’m ashamed to talk about it with him’” (Int. 1, M, 22). The respondents suspected that the lack of initiative on the part of the parents could be attributed to their conviction that their children would receive the required knowledge at school. This theory is not necessarily far-fetched. Indeed, a study conducted by the Educational Research Institute (Instytut Badań Edukacyjnych, 2015) reveals that the overwhelming majority of parents who took part thought that information about psychosexual development and sexuality should be provided in school classes.

**A source of knowledge: school**

Considering that the acceptance of sexuality education as part of school education is almost universal, it could be assumed that the above mentioned transfer of responsibility for providing young people with information on sexuality refers to the school subject called Family Life Education. However, ever since it was first introduced to schools there have been critical voices questioning its sexuality education value (see Waszyńska, Groth, & Kowalczyk, 2013). Even the name of the subject itself reflects the emphasis attached to social structure (Parker, Wellings, & Lazarus, 2009) and suggests the normative nature of the course content.

Family Life Education is a non-obligatory subject taught for fourteen hours a year (including five hours separately for boys and girls). In view of the fact that such a limited number of teaching hours makes it practically impossible to cover the entire course programme, the teachers need to be selective about the choice of topics.8 This, in turn, may affect the quality and reliability of information provided in classes, especially that it is based on the individual morality of particular teachers. As a result, information provided to students might be unreliable and often does not take into account the achievements of modern science (Chomczyńska-Miliszkiewicz, 2002). The teachers, who frequently are not prepared to discussing issues of sexuality, tend to spend class time talking about red herrings (Józefowska, 2009). Depending on the approach adopted by particular teachers,

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8 Apart from this, analyses of textbooks recommended by the Ministry of Education stress a number of their faults, e.g. they fail to present scientific knowledge about human sexuality, overlook such issues as preventive healthcare and sexual violence, provide information that can foster homophobic attitudes (see Chomczyńska-Miliszkiewicz, 2002; Pawłowska & Synakiewicz, 2015; Wąz, 2011; Wejbert-Wąsiewicz, 2009; Zabielska, 2009).
young people have a greater or smaller chance of receiving answers to the questions they have. If their parents and teachers fail to meet their expectations about sexuality education, young people have to look for answers on their own, and often try to find them in the media.

**A source of knowledge: the media**

Culture is a powerful factor of socialisation which “forms the identity of the young generation. (...) Fashion, music, advertising, sport, popular magazines and TV programmes – these are the spheres that are particularly important in this respect” (Melosik, 2012, p. 47). Access to these spheres is provided by the media, which, as agents of secondary socialisation, have a great impact on the development of young people’s sexuality (Moore & Rosenthal, 1996) and are one of the factors that determine their sexual behaviour (Królikowska, 2009).

What most prominently featured in the informants’ comments on the media was their conviction that the content they display can have a negative impact on the youth. They most often referred to the enormous amount of sex-related content in advertisements, music videos, and the Internet: “The media... Well, they sell sex so much these days that it's not some kind of a taboo; and there are all these music videos, some of them are like porn, you could really have a jerk off to the music, no problem” (Int. 3, M, 18). Considering excessive display of sexual content, the media are in the position to (re)define the norms by setting or stretching the limits of what can be regarded as socially acceptable. In this way media-presented images of behaviour which normalise and often trivialise sexuality appear to enjoy social acceptance.

Female informants stressed that the media create and uphold cultural scenarios of the ideal woman, a paragon of beauty setting the body standards that need to be pursued.9 As explained, they saw this message as a threat to the self-esteem of young girls like them: “It’s difficult to accept your body if you can see that it’s not perfect. And even if you are aware that, well, it’s a computer-enhanced image and this or that model surely doesn’t look like that, you really have it deep in your head that you don’t look as you should” (Int. 20, F, 21). The media set and maintain the illusion that such a female body (tall, slim and curvy at the same time) is a common occurrence in real life. In fact, this construct is closer to the Weberian ideal type, one that does not exist in social reality in a pure form. Conse-

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9 The informants stressed that there also is an ideal type of male body. However, the costs of not meeting such standards are incomparably lower than in the case of women in an analogical situation.
sequently, we can talk about a peculiar oxymoron: “general/average ideal type”. Although young females are able to critically approach the unreal nature of the proposed models, such constructs can result in lack of acceptance of themselves and their own body, and, in severe cases, expose them to health risks, e.g. those associated with eating disorders.

Talking about the necessity of adjusting the body to the “general ideal type”, the informants observed that young girls often want to pursue the body standards presented in the media not for themselves, but for the boys: “Young girls, in general, if they see something, they want to achieve it because others like it, because their guys like it. And it’s a fact that most of them are like that” (Int. 18, F, 21). Modelling their appearance and behaviour on the norms developed on the basis of male desires and pleasures is encapsulated in the concept proposed by Janet Holland and her associates from the Women, Risk and AIDS Project (WRAP) (Holland et al., 1998): “the male in the head” is a metaphor of internalised and institutionalised control of men over women. Cultural scenarios based on this model involve male power that has an impact not only on the form of physical heterosexual practices, but also on the minds, beliefs and desires of both men and women. The persons taking part in the study stressed that it is women who have to conform to male expectations more often and to a greater extent. Since this masculine domination is internalised in society, women are put in a position where they yield to the (often unconscious) male pressure to shape their femininity in relation and according to the ubiquitous masculine model (Holland et al., 1998).

While comments on the message conveyed by television and the print media were characterised by concern over its potentially negative impact, the assessment of the Internet was somewhat ambivalent. The informants perceived this medium as a source of information concerning sexuality that could be used in the absence of any alternative: “And if you don’t want to talk about it with your friends, then you just use the Internet. What choice do you really have?” (Int. 1, M, 22). They also often mentioned anonymity as a considerable advantage of the Internet over other sources of knowledge. Such voices are hardly surprising in view of taboos about sexuality and the attendant shame or embarrassment about raising the subject of sexuality in direct interaction with others: “To be honest, it was somehow embarrassing; I mean, it was better to look it up yourself than ask someone or talk to someone in person. It was simply easier this way” (Int. 18, F, 21). In the course of

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10 In this context, the informants referred only to heterosexual relationships.
interviews the informants were asked about the type of information they had looked up on the Internet. Their replies included a broad spectrum of sexuality issues, such as:

(1) sexually transmitted infections and protection against them: “Yes! On the Internet, yes. It all started from porn, and then I got more interested in infectious diseases, sexually transmitted, and it was just out of interest; how to protect yourself, how to avoid them” (Int. 2, M, 22);

(2) attempts to verify their identity, such as: “What is homosexuality and what are its characteristics?” (Int. 2, M, 22);

(3) advice on sexual intercourse, e.g. how to give pleasure to your partner: “I used the Internet at this stage; it’s a bit silly, or pathetic even, but I checked sex guides, I don’t know, something like ‘How to satisfy your partner in bed’ and things like that” (Int. 2, M, 22).

Although the informants stressed the advantages of using the Internet, they also noticed a number of dangers it creates as regards interpersonal contacts (e.g. limited face-to-face interaction with others) and the content, which should not be accepted uncritically. However, the danger that was mentioned most frequently was pornography. Indeed, “the deluge of sexual content” (Wąż, 2011, p. 64) is identified as the key risk factor to young people. The contents of cultural scenarios used in pornography tend to present a distorted picture which reduces people to mere objects and glorifies the experience of sexual pleasure while at the same time overlooking the sphere of emotions (Zabielska, 2009, p. 76).

The informants most often expressed their concern about the potential impact of pornography on young boys. In this context, the female informants stressed that men can develop unreasonable and unrealistic expectations about both the sexual intercourse and the appearance of their partners. It can be assumed, then, that cultural scenarios presented by pornography intensify the impact of “the male in the head”: “And it’s all so nicely packaged, it may be good-quality pornography or a nice advert. And that’s also what makes me feel embarrassed, that’s why I had some kind of a block and I couldn’t let another person see me; I mean, I felt I’m not perfect so probably I don’t deserve the kind of thing I see on television” (Int. 19, F, 20).

In the absence of other available sources of knowledge about sexuality, a considerable proportion of young people need to gain access to such information on their own. The Internet offers anonymity and, provided they select reliable sites, can meet their needs
and answer their questions concerning sexuality. However, the risk this involves is really high: without a proper context and explanation, the contents of the cultural scenarios they acquire can influence their expectations of themselves and their future sexual partners. Moreover, particularly in the case of girls the dominant cultural scenarios presented in the media can, and often do, have a negative impact on the process of construction of their own image in relation to the “general ideal type” of woman and “the male in the head”.

Conclusion

The results of the first stage of my research project indicate that the informants’ parents, often consciously, did not engage in the sexuality education of their children and the cultural scenarios they transferred were largely based on the idea of sexuality as a taboo. As a result, the respondents were reluctant to turn to their parents for advice on questions concerning this issue. Instead, they preferred to use other sources of knowledge, such as the Internet, which offered them anonymity and, if they selected the sites they arbitrarily considered reliable, was able to meet their need for information about sexuality. A considerable proportion of those questioned were critical of the models of sexuality and cultural scenarios presented in the media. They stressed the negative impact they might have both on young people’s perception of the body and on their intimate relationships.

These findings point to two most important conclusions. Firstly, in view of the insufficient level of dialogue and consciously pursued sexuality education in the family – which, according to the informants, should be attributed to shame and embarrassment on the part of the parents rather than to their ignorance – a solution that might be considered is to develop an educational project addressed to parents. Such a programme would both present the importance of sexuality education of young people and teach them how to talk with their children about sex. Secondly, since the Internet is the main source of information about sexuality, it would be advisable to consider developing an interactive platform devoted to sexuality education, where young people could both find new information and verify what they already know. The content of such a platform should be prepared by a team of psychologists, pedagogues, sexologists, medical doctors, sociologists and sex educators. These auxiliary measures would, in the first case, make parents aware of their role in sexuality education of their children and, in the second case, provide young people with an opportunity to verify their knowledge using a reliable source of information.
On the one hand, the level of dialogue and consciously pursued sexuality education in the course of primary socialisation is insufficient. On the other, the institutionalised form of such education, i.e. the school subject called Family Life Education, comes under a lot of criticism both from experts and students. Under the circumstances, it is hardly surprising that young people look for answers to their questions concerning this vital area of human life on their own. The role of sexual education should not be underestimated, particularly that in view of the popularity of the Internet – which provides access to an enormous amount of content that is not always understandable (or suitable) to young audience – offering an adequate explanation of the significance and context of independently acquired information can have an enormous impact on young people’s development.

Translated by Piotr Styk

Bibliography


The media and other agents of socialisation as young people’s sources of knowledge about sexuality

The discourse on sexuality education reflects a great diversity of norms, beliefs and attitudes towards sex and is dominated by the voices of adults who belong to the political and symbolic elites (e.g. politicians, teachers, clergy). As a result, the opinions of young people, which often reflect authentic, personal and generational needs, are too often ignored. What is more, research shows that parents often seem to avoid discussions concerning sexuality with their children and transfer responsibility for educating young people to school. However, evaluations of the implementation of the school subject called Family Life Education (wychowanie do życia w rodzinie) suggest that it is often taught at an unsatisfactory level. Consequently, young people have to acquire and verify information about sexuality on their own. Based on individual in-depth interviews, this analysis considers selected sources from which young people obtain knowledge about sexuality. The article focuses on one of such


sources, the media (including the Internet). It also aims to discuss young people’s ambivalent attitude towards self-acquired knowledge about sexuality.

**Keywords:**
cultural scenarios, sexual scripts, sexuality education, media, adolescents

**Rola mediów i innych agend socjalizacji jako źródła wiedzy młodzieży o seksualności**

Dyskusja dotycząca edukacji seksualnej wyraża olbrzymią różnorodność norm, wierzeń oraz postaw wobec seksu i zdominowana jest przez głosy osób dorosłych należących do elit politycznych i symbolicznych (np. polityków, nauczycieli, duchownych). Opinie młodych ludzi, które nierzadko są odzwierciedleniem ich osobistych i pokoleniowych potrzeb, są natomiast nader często ignorowane. Co więcej, badania pokazują, że rodzice raczej unikają rozmów ze swoimi dziećmi na temat szeroko pojętej seksualności, cedząc pośrednio obowiązek edukowania młodych ludzi w tym zakresie na szkołę. Ewaluacje realizacji „wychowania do życia w rodzinie” sugerują jednak, że jej poziom jest niesatysfakcjonujący. Wobec powyższego młodzi ludzie nie tylko zmuszeni są sami zdobywać informacje na ten temat, ale także je selekcjonować i weryfikować. Oparta na indywidualnych wywiadach pogłębiona analiza wskazuje wybrane źródła, z jakich młodzi ludzie czerpią wiedzę dotyczącą seksualności. Artykuł skupia się na jednym z tych źródeł: na mediach (w tym na internecie) i omawia ambivalentację odczuwaną przez młodych ludzi w stosunku do samodzielnie uzyskiwanej wiedzy dotyczącej seksualności.

**Słowa kluczowe:**
scenariusze kulturowe, skrypty seksualne, edukacja seksualna, media, młodzież

**Note:**
This is the translation of the original article entitled “Rola mediów i innych agend socjalizacji jako źródła wiedzy młodzieży o seksualności”, which was published in *Adeptus*, issue 10, 2017.

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