THE PROJECT, based in New York City, began as the brainstorm of Barry Farber, a nationally syndicated radio broadcaster. “In 1968, I interviewed a notorious madam whose bordello was famous for its specialty—sadomasochism,” Farber explains. “At that time, I told her that when she was not just a sexual mercenary, but more an accommodation of the unfulfilled desires of men—men whose fantasies were so bizarre that they couldn’t find satisfaction anywhere else. I also spoke with many people on my show about their sexual fantasies, and I began to realize how wicked people feel about their inner sexual thoughts.”

The message that THE PROJECT is trying to convey is that those who are “sexually otherwise,” or who have a sexual preference which is different than most people’s, should not consider themselves to be sick or freaky. “Society allows people to be as individual as they please as far as politics, religion, economics, clothes, etc. says Farber. “So why should sex be different?”

With the help of psychiatrists, psychologists, and journalists, THE PROJECT has explored the area of sexual “variations.” (Words like aberration and deviation are not part of their vocabulary.) Much of the information they have compiled has been taken from interviews and correspondence with people from all over the country—those who have taken the unconventional sexual route and who are ready to talk about it. What THE PROJECT has discovered is that while many homosexuals, lesbians, transvestites, and even sadomasochists have stepped out of the proverbial closet, many people have still been left behind. These are the people whose sexual desires are so unique that society has not been able to categorize them, or whose fantasies are so bizarre that they are not even recognizable as sexual in nature.

In an attempt to enlighten the public, and also to add respectability to even the strangest of sexual practices, THE PROJECT developed a theater of fantasy called Another Way to Love. It is the "continued on page 58!"

In dramatization of some very unique and authentic sexual fantasies—fantasies which have come to THE PROJECT by way of mail or interview. “We know that people are not going to see the play and eliminate forty years of guilt and self-loathing. But we hope to make them more aware and start them thinking,” says Farber.

Another Way to Love plays to packed audiences every Thursday and Friday nights in a coy Soho loft. The action takes place on a small set-covered stage, outlined with tiny Christmas lights. The audience watches from chairs and giant floor cushions scattered around the room, while PROJECT researchers and actors Leil Lowinder and Chip Durgom scream, sweat, wriggle, tickle, and whip their way through nine strange fantasy vignettes. The broader themes include submission/dominance, foot fetishes, transvestism, infantilism, spanking, and humiliation. But some of the more unique fantasies depict people making love to manikins, walking around inside a woman’s vagina, being subjected to tickle torture, and even being eaten like a piece of chicken.

When the performance is over, members of the audience and the actors discuss the fantasies which have just been portrayed. People are encouraged to share any sexual visions they might have, and are invited to recreate those fantasies on stage with one or both of the actors of their choice to do so.

Leil Lowinder says that some people can never let go and share their sexual fantasies. For these people sexual fantasies are far too personal to be discussed; they are only to be enjoyed during their most private moments. But for some, it may open up and act out their fantasies and then make use of the memories of that experience for years. Other people act out their fantasies and find that it doesn’t provide them with the stimulation they had thought it would.

For the lucky ones, acting out their fantasies can be an exciting avenue to sexual self-expression. There is no nudity or vulgarity in Another Way to Love. THE PROJECT’s aim is to tune people in, not turn people off. “We don’t want our play to be just another seedy exploitation show,” says Farber. “Sexual explicitness, in many instances, would detract from and be counterproductive to the accurate portrayal of the fantasies. Anyway,” he continues, “we addressed what to us was the only unusual sex fantasies, which have often have little to do with the actual sex act. The scenes are more of a prelude to lovemaking, a creative personal kind of sexual foreplay.”

Barry Farber and the rest of the people who work on THE PROJECT think of themselves as “ambassadors of sexual fantasy.” Eventually we hope to open up a ‘cleaning room’ says Farber, "where people can research and read authentic case histories on the subjects that interest them. And they will be able to do it without looking over their shoulders or paying exorbitant prices, like they have to do now in the ‘adult’ bookstores.

Fantasies and fetishes will be systematically catalogued in books, so that people can quickly and easily locate the material.

Aside from their Thursday and Friday night performances, THE PROJECT travels to colleges, churches, and parties to spread their message. Chip and Leil, who have assembled the presentation, operate all the lighting and sound equipment. Anyone who is interested in arranging a showing of Another Way to Love, or in arranging a reservation, should call (212) 580-9159.

Another point of Another Way to Love, says Farber, “is to make people acknowledge that sexual fantasies are an open subject to be discussed. Our mission is to have everybody in the room who is ashamed of his real desires walk proudly out the door saying, ‘Maybe I’m not so strange,’ and to have those whose desires are not so strange leave saying, ‘Maybe I’m missing something.’

Barbara Hirsch is the assistant editor of Penthouse Forum.