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Trends. Viagra, Sex, and Contemporary Security Issues

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Like the demand expectations of Holland's 18th century tulip craze, the quest for Viagra and medically supported sexual nirvana is exposing unflattering psychologies that will long bemuse social historians of the future. Of grimmer interest is the collision between prurient interests and the significant impact of sex on global security Issues.

Increasing sexual transmission rates of acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) are already fomenting trends of sociopolitical destabilization in African countries such as Uganda and Rwanda and pose similar threats to other countries that do not engage in effective primary prevention programs. The frequency of sex as it effects conception and procreation is becoming ever more important in so-called intractable conflicts such as those in Ireland, Lebanon, and Israel. As population ratios change between Catholics and Protestants, among Shiites, Sunnis, Christians, and Druse, and between orthodox and secular Jews, as well as Ashkenazis and Sephardics, Israeli Arabs and Jews, and Palestinians and Israelis, so, too, does power on crucial political Issues. Moreover, socially constructed groups often disappear through intergroup sex, conception, and procreation leading to the disappearance of some political Issues and the rise of others. And yet again--as in the United States--increasing and decreasing birth rates and constraints (social, cultural, geographic) on available sexual partners can have significant consequences for social security funds, employment (vocational security), pools for military recruiting, the incidence and prevalence of medical disorders detracting from life satisfaction and gross national product, and social, cultural, scientific, and technological innovation. Finally--among many other consequences--sexual desires have counterintelligence and personnel security implications as the many anecdotes and case histories about German Democratic Republic-controlled blackmail, honey traps, and seductions underline.

So while speculation concerning the effects of Viagra have already induced a global black-market in magic sex pills and hedonistic promise that may or may not meet the fate of Holland's 17th century speculation in tulips, speculation about the global security impact of sex clearly are on a more solid foundation. (See Kleinfeld, N.R. (May 6, 1998). Viagra, the pill that could: For a doctor, it brings writer's cramps. The New York Times, <http://www.nytimes.com>; Kolata, G. (April 5, 1998). Drugs that deliver more than originally promised. The New York Times, <http://www.nytimes.com>; Pear, R. (May 28, 1998). States that oppose mandatory medical payments. The New York Times, <http://www.nytimes.com>.) (Keywords: AIDS, Balance of Power, Global Security, Sex, Viagra.)