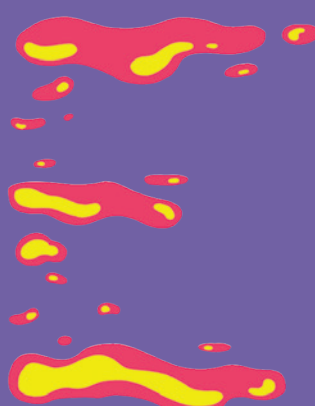
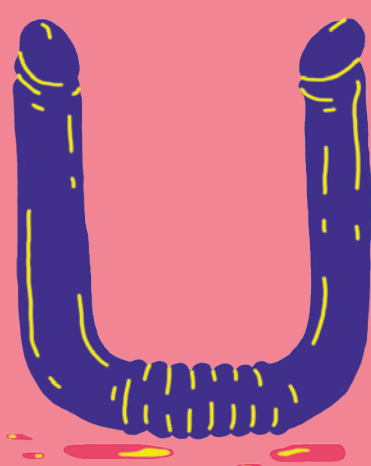
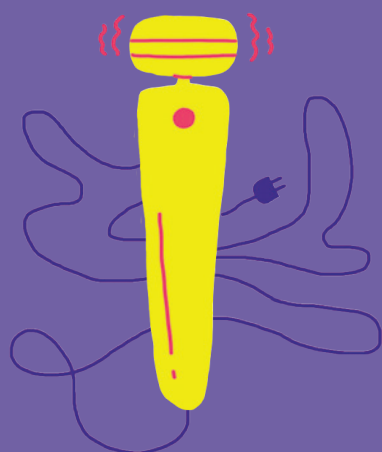
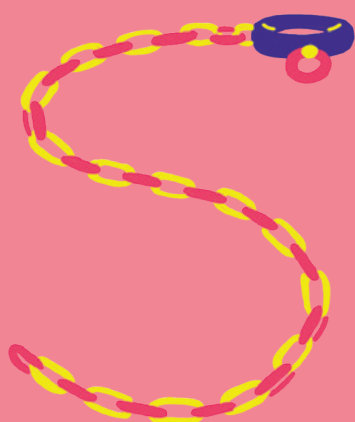
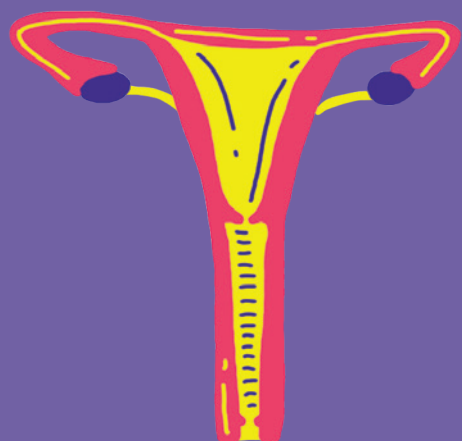


fnewsmagazine

The School of the Art Institute of Chicago arts, culture, and politics

DEC '17 **04** **HORNY FOR PORNY** **10** **OLD MAN AND THE SAIC** **12** **DANGER: TOXIC WASTE** **16** **FUCKIN' MADONNA**



**THE SEX ISSUE:
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EDITION OF
F NEWSMAGAZINE
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TURN US ON,
OFF, AND AROUND.
OPEN UP TO
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2017 REAR-END WRAP-UP

Idaho potato exports to Japan:
Resumed after 11 years

City with the highest number of
searches for sex toys:
Atlanta, GA

US congressmen named John,
or John but spelled wrong:
9

Number of dogs:
89.7 million

Number of good dogs:
89.7 million

Cotton-Eye Joe music video
views on YouTube:
39,217,769 as of 12:57pm on 20 November 2017

Foods that are now bad for you, apparently:
yogurt, dried fruit, wheat bread, salad,
anything made with love

Crowd at Trump's final inauguration:
~193,000

Crowd at Obama's first inauguration (2009):
~513,000

Number of war criminals about whom
we've apparently reversed our stance:
1

Hours of work per week needed for the
average millennial to afford just to exist:
41*

Countries included in the
Paris Climate Accord:
not us

Worst phrase:
“Fake News”

Shortest length of time an employee
of the Trump White House
maintained their position:
one Scaramucci

~

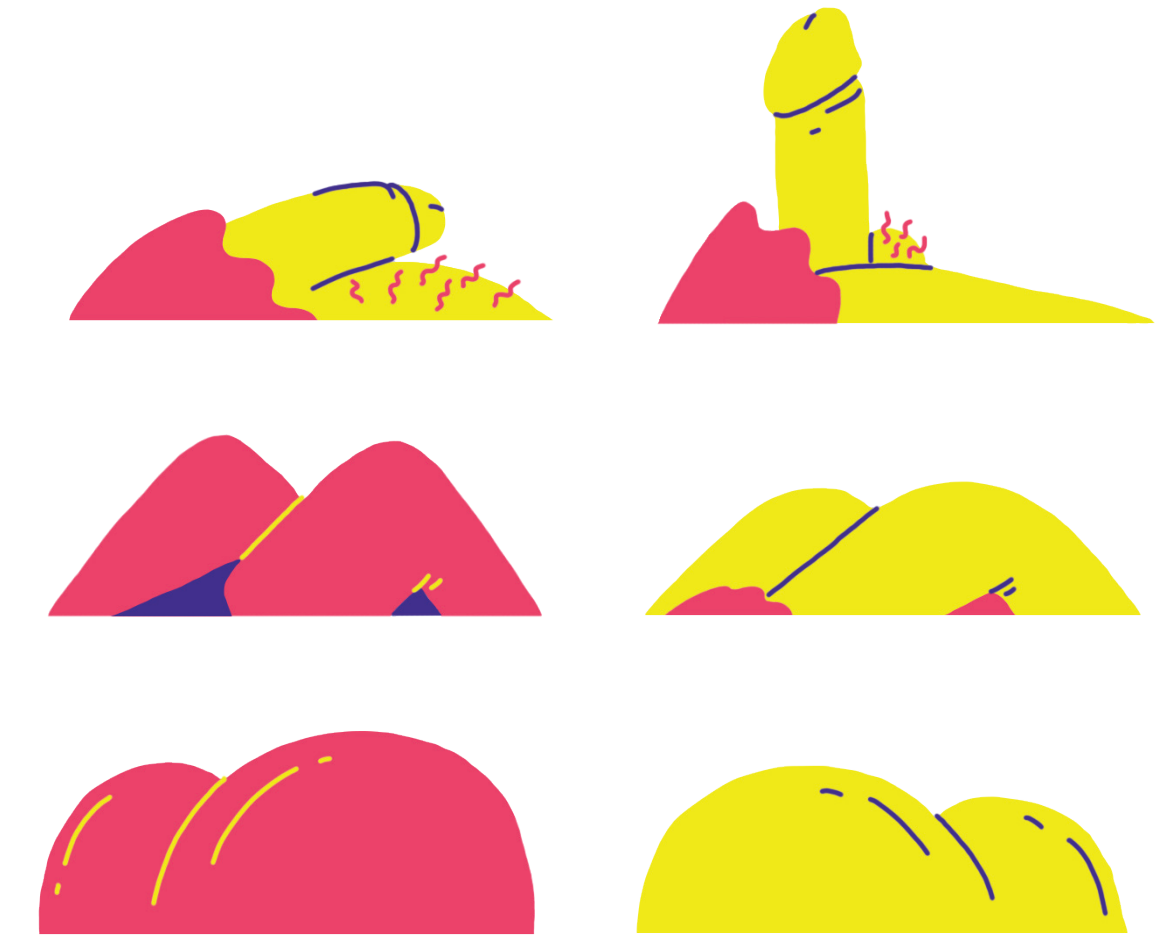
*Average health insurance premium
for an individual, nationally:
\$321/month

Median rent for a one-bedroom apartment
in top 50 cities in America:
\$1,234.43/month

Average student loan payment
(borrowers 20–30 years old):
\$351/month

Cost of food (purchasers 19–50 years old):
\$237.20/month

Median income for a millennial:
\$13/hr



fnewsmagazine

F Newsmagazine is a journal of arts, culture, and politics, edited and designed by students at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. The print edition is published eight times a year and the web edition is published year-round. We should be very clear that the student staff of F Newsmagazine, and not the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, is solely responsible for its contents. Like, duh.

Visit www.fnewsmagazine.com for more.

LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

Of the eight print issues F Newsmagazine publishes each year, the staff will often select one to focus on a specific theme. Last year, the April issue was our “Comedy” edition. (We hope it was funny.) This year, we decided to focus on sex. Here’s part of a conversation between managing editors Mary Fons and Irena Frumkin as they discussed the idea:

IRENA: Yeah, but like, what *about* sex?
MARY: I don’t know. Sexy stuff.
IRENA: But not *just* sexy stuff.
MARY: Right. Because shit’s fucked up.
IRENA: Fuck!
MARY: God!
IRENA: Should we even do it??
MARY: I don’t know. Yeah, probably.
IRENA: Yeah. Fuck yeah!
MARY: Exactly!

Irena Frumkin & Mary Fons

LETTER FROM THE ART DIRECTORS

It’s so very enjoyable to poke fun at Mike Pence. Whether it’s his painted-on halo of hypocritical Christian morality that makes him glow in the dark, or how he calls his wife “mother” like a fucking weirdo, it’s hard not to get in a jab or two at the vice president’s expense. But has anyone really stopped to think that maybe he might not like being the butt of America’s collective jokes? Well, we thought about it. For about six hours. And used that time to write more jokes about Mike Pence. Fuck that guy. Here’s a magazine.

Annie Leue & Sevy Perez

PG

Art Directors Annie Leue, Sevy Perez
Comics Contributors Irene Boyias, Gabe Howell, Jeremy Tinder, Oberon Waters
Comics Editor Sacha Lusk
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PG-13

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Entertainment Editor Rosie Accola
F+ Editor Emily Rich
Staff Writer Jose Nateras
Article Contributors Cat DeBacker, Sam Heaps, Annie Leue, Sarah Miller, Jose Nateras, Sevy Perez, Krutika Surve, C.T. Wright



ON THE COVER

“The Sex Issue”
by Rohan McDonald
Sex is not just about fucking. Each letterform on our December cover represents just some of the many ways in which we exist as complicated, mushy meat suits interacting with other complicated, mushy meat suits. It’s all very complicated. Yep.

F+

- 04** HOME IS THAT PORN VIDEO YOU PLAY ON REPEAT
One woman’s cumming of age story
By Sam Heaps
- 06** YOU OUGHTA ‘OH!’
Let’s all understand orgasms
By Cat DeBacker
- 07** CHOOSE YOUR OWN SURRENDER
A gay mormon comes clean
By C.T. Wright
- 08** PEOPLE, PLACES, AND THINGS MIKE PENCE CAN’T BE ALONE WITH
A partial list
By Annie Leue & Sevy Perez

SAIC / NEWS

- 09** IN KINK WE TRUST
Chicago, after dark
Photos by Juan Carlos Herrera
- 10** STRANGE BEDFELLOWS
The SAIC-Hugh Hefner collab
By Grace Wells
- 12** TOXIC WASTE
Mapping powerful men accused of sexual misconduct in 2017
By F Newsmagazine Staff
- 14** DESIGNED OBJECTS STUDENTS REVIEW SEX TOYS
For your pleasure
By Krutika Surve

ARTS

- 15** ‘PEG’: LIAM FITZGERALD’S THEATRICAL SEXPERIMENT
Bend over, baby
By Sarah Miller
- 16** ‘SEX’ IN THE RYERSON
Considering Madonna’s naughty book, 25 years later
By Mary Fons
- 18** 6 FAMOUS BEDS IN ART HISTORY
Come on in
By Irena Frumkin
- 19** PROGRAMMABLE LOVE
Plugging into ‘My Sex Robot’
By Cat DeBacker

- 20** HOT/NOT
Movie sex scenes: The good and the bad
By Jose Nateras and Krutika Surve

COMICS

- 22** CONTRIBUTIONS BY
Irene Boyias, Gabe Howell, Jeremy Tinder, Oberon Waters

Home is that porn video you play on repeat

Navigating the intersection of objectification and arousal

by Sam Heaps

One hand is holding a plastic cup of boxed pinot noir I'm swigging with desperation. One hand is wiping excess lubricant onto the sides of my unbuttoned jeans. Freeing both hands, I shakily clutch my iPhone and message my friend. The tone I hope to convey is urgency.

It's the same video. Nothing else. I can't get off to anything else. What is **WRONG** with me!?" Every time I watch porn, I believe there's something wrong with me — even though I've recently discovered that I really *do* like watching porn. The reason it took me so long is I didn't know what I needed from porn: mainly, to feel invited in.

There were long periods of my life when my sexuality was not in my control. Like most women, my body, desirability, age, and experience (or lack thereof) have all been used against me since childhood. This objectification can often become violent. So it wasn't fun — I would even say it was painful — to watch porn for most of my life, knowing the inherent violence of the patriarchal culture that created the images, fetishes, and categories.

I want the problem to be me, though. I always want the problem to be me.

In the text conversation with my friend, I detail every psychological failing that could point to my love of this particular piece of the internet (a three-minute, very NSFW tryst that would be considered by most to be standard fare.) There must be some guilty reason beyond pleasure to enjoy this so much; I'm begging for an answer.

Am I transposing myself onto the woman's body? Does it remind me of an old love affair? A particular lover? I say I can see how it could connect to A, or god, to B! Does this mean I'm not over them? When is it creepy? When is watching

porn creepy? (In my heart I imagine it always is, a bunch of old men with their cocks in their hands, watching young women on screens.) I ask my friend, stammering via keypad: "It isn't hiding some latent fetish I can't even see, is it?" I beg her: "Please tell me I'll cum to something else again. Please?"

I watch the messages drip, drip, drip towards my confidante, the icons on the side shifting slowly from a check mark to a colored photo. What are they thinking? Are they calling the cops?? Porn is so laden with guilt for me, I assume they must be calling the cops.

They message back.

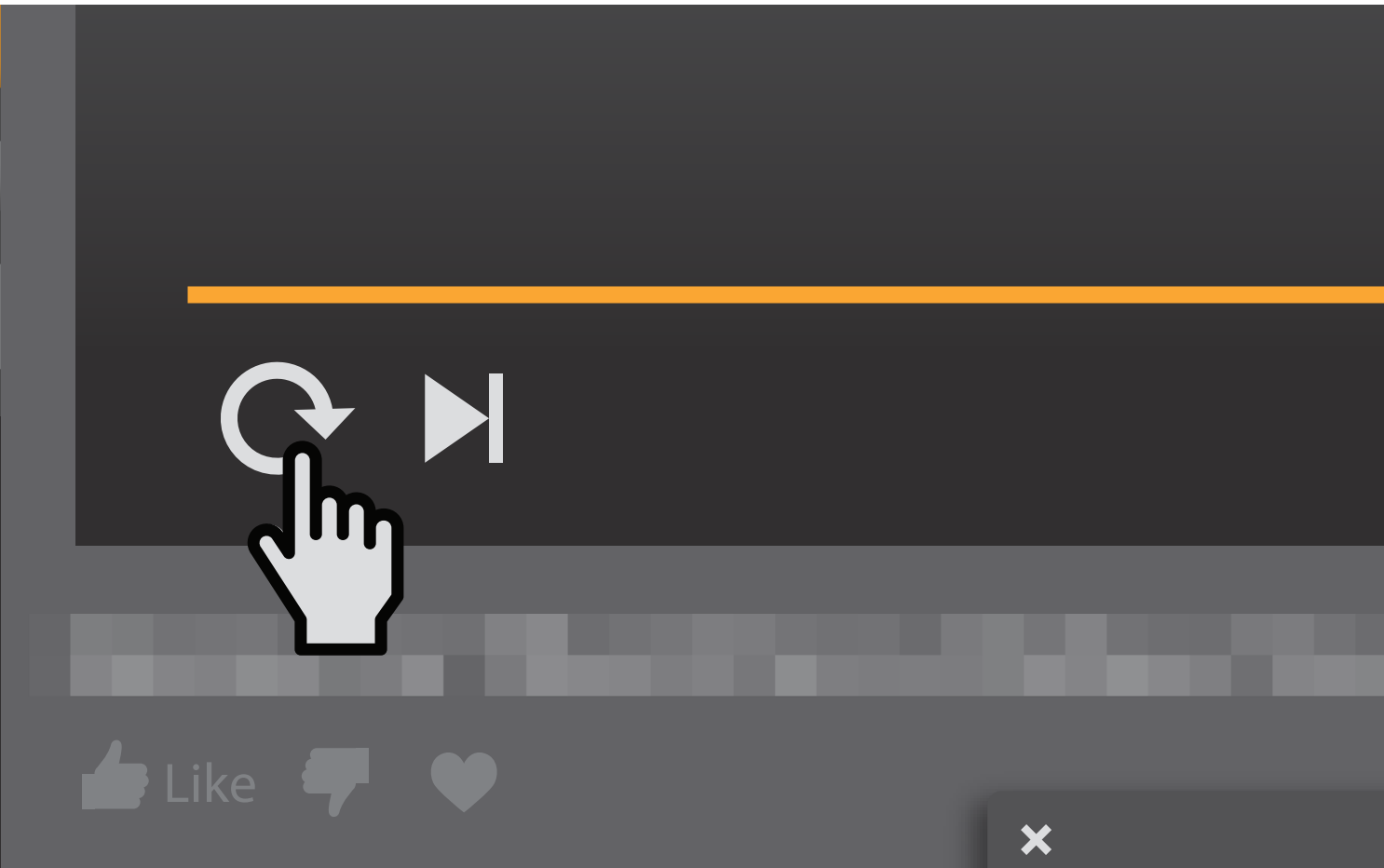
"I gotcha. Ninety percent of all orgasms I've had since February are to this video right here."

A link is attached.

What a glory to be invited! What a glory is belonging! What a glory is permission! I click on the link immediately. After it finishes loading, I pour some boxed merlot on top of my boxed pinot noir and drink heartily. My internet is slow and the video is patchy at first. It is a video of two women, still clothed. One is a curvy brunette, one is a thin blonde, and they're just — talking.

I instantly feel aroused by the normalcy of it. (I close the advertisement of a woman getting a facial on the top of the screen.) I am aroused by being allowed to watch women without the usual predatory feeling that accompanies it — after all, I know how much I myself hate to be watched with arousal. The normalcy and safety I feel is mainly due to the fact that I have been allowed entrance here. The video feels consensual in a way no video before ever has. Of course, it is problematic





that I was granted permission to see them by my friend and not the girls themselves (or only as far as they've agreed to post themselves on Pornhub).

One of the roommates finds a strap-on in a desk drawer. The two girls giggle. One tries it on. Coconut oil is applied. And then their clothes are off. They're in bed. They're laughing and fucking. It goes on for a good hour. I cum.

Let's not mince words: I cum four times. The whole experience feels like being welcomed into someone's home. It's a little messy, there are imperfections (e.g., queefs abound), but it is those traits that make me feel safe and enveloped and welcomed.

This is something I crave when watching porn: safety for myself, safety for others.

I have always felt icky watching people without their explicit consent. I'm always asking myself: Do they really want to be doing this? How are they feeling right now? Does that hurt?

I also think, more selfishly, am I allowed to feel this kind of arousal? Am I allowed to be a voyeur? This guilt is one of many reasons, along with some sexual assault and very messy self-esteem, why I didn't reach orgasm until my late twenties. (A note to ladies who haven't gotten there yet — there's still hope out there for you.)

I was a sexually active young person who just couldn't, and still can't, "get there" with a partner. And while my male friends would brag about their masturbatory ventures, I claimed just not to like it. It wasn't as though I hadn't tried masturbating. I'd masturbated for lovers to let them watch. I'd touched myself thinking of someone I was dying to see (Obi-wan Kenobi and Padme of "Star Wars" both snuck in there a few times in my youth), but I had never in my

life felt authority over exploring my own body. Beyond that, there was a deep sense of smuttiness and guilt (aka shame) that went into any attempt. That is why certain videos that I find — those that I'm invited into — feel so important to me. The invitation creates a sexual home where I'm not forced to doubt myself.

I say this and simultaneously wish, with a heaping of internalized misogyny, I was enough of a badass to explore without inhibitions. I wish I didn't need any permission other than my own. But I've spent my life as a woman, and I have too much baggage around a male-originated fantasy of what my sexual identity "should" be.

I don't think it is a bad thing to want an invitation to something lovely and natural. Maybe if we were all sharing consensual porn footage of real humans interacting with one another, women would feel safer and more engaged. More wanted and able to want. Maybe we would all feel more comfortable and ethical and sexual exploring alone, too.

Maybe we can start as women by giving ourselves that first invitation to experience sexual pleasure on our own, without the inherent shame of being "alone," without wondering what someone would think if they wandered in on us. We can start by being someone who owns our own feeling of desire, rather than merely being the object of someone else's.

Sam Heaps (MFAW '19) is 10 percent into "Star Trek Voyager" and 90 percent into spending time with her dog. She previously worked as a contributing writer for & Of Other Things Magazine.

Am I allowed to feel this kind of arousal?
Am I allowed to be a voyeur?

Allie Oops

Allie is an artist, activist, sex worker and sex educator. Her erotica is freely available and completely crowdfunded.

Vex Ashley

Vex Ashley spearheads A Four Chambered Heart, a community funded , art-minded porn project. Ashley works to eliminate the distinction between pornography and art in photography, filmmaking, and digital media.

Erika Lust

Erika is a swedish filmmaker and director who aims to make porn like an indie movie. Central to her production is a set of principles including the importance of female pleasure, equal pay, and safe sex.

Stormy Daniels

Daniels' work aligns more closely with mainstream pornography. However, she is one of the only female sex-workers to hold creative authority over pornographic films funded by major



PHASE ONE: **Excitement!**

Blood begins to flow to penises and nipples. Breasts, clitoris, the vulva minora and majora begin to swell as vaginal lubrication begins. Everyone's heart rate, blood pressure, and breathing are accelerated. Sexy, right?



PHASE TWO: **Plateau!!**

The penis becomes fully erect. The opening to the vagina narrows, the clitoris disappears into its hood. At this point, muscles associated with each body's erogenous zones may begin to spasm. This is the point where you may want to encourage your partner to touch areas you find particularly sensitive and pleasurable.



PHASE THREE: **Orgasm!!!!!!**

*Climax! Sadly, the shortest phase, only lasting a few seconds. Penises ejaculate semen. The vaginal walls will contract rhythmically (roughly every 0.8 seconds, an insanely interesting fact). During orgasm, muscle tension and blood-vessel engorgement reach their peak; some may react with a "grasping" type reflex with the hands and feet. **BONUS FACT!** Orgasms produce oxytocin, sometimes referred to as "the cuddle hormone." Oxytocin is correlated with the urge to bond and be affectionate towards our partners. Aww.*



PHASE FOUR: **Mmm ... Resolution.**

The uterus and clitoris return to their normal positions. The penis returns to a flaccid state. Many female bodies find it possible to experience additional orgasms relatively quickly; for males, there is a refractory period in which it is impossible to orgasm until a certain amount of time has passed. Sad!

You oughta 'Oh!' Understanding your orgasm (and mine)

by Cat DeBacker

The first time I experienced an orgasm was this past summer. It was the culmination of a lot of down time, PornHub, and a strange relationship with my least favorite pillow.

I've been sexually active for six years, had multiple partner, and lots of inventive sex. Yet, my first orgasm took a week of experimentation, a fixation on a particular video, and a pillow.

Why the hell did it take me so long? There are a lot of different places to lay the blame: my Catholic upbringing; the lack of attention given in grade school Health class to understanding sex as a natural and pleasurable experience; the fact that I am a cis woman, culturally programmed to view my sexuality as shameful. It could be all or none of these things.

One possibility is that I have been taught that my sexual and reproductive organs are like my digestive system: gross and in similar locations. The idea of what is "below the belt" became synonymous with, "out of sight, out of mind." I wasn't entirely sure what an orgasm was until I Googled it ... like, just now.

Let me explain.

It all starts with something called "the sexual response cycle." Originally coined by researchers William H. Masters and Virginia E. Johnson in the late 1950s, the term refers to the sequence of events that occurs in the human body before, during, and after sexually arousing and stimulating activities.

Masters and Johnson found the orgasm happens in four phases: **Excitement**, **Plateau**, **Orgasm**, and **Resolution**. Every "body" can experience this cycle, but

each body gets aroused by, and climaxes, from different things at different times. So what physically happens during these four phases? The boxes at the left will take you through each sexy step.

Arguably, "Orgasm" is the best part of that entire cycle. It's the payoff, the big finish for all the physical labor that has generated the need for a climax.

But there's a prevailing mentality that orgasm is the ultimate goal, the only reason for intimate touch. This seems to be a disconnect between partners that have penetrative sex. Must all sensual touch be for an orgasm?

This ideology has dominated the majority of my sexual encounters. It feels like I can't simply experience pleasure — I *have* to orgasm. Then, if I don't perform fast enough and my partner reaches climax before I do, their now-defunct penis becomes an excuse for my partner to not help me reach that same physical sensation.

Or the opposite happens. If I communicate to my partner that an orgasm just isn't possible this time, it manages to devalue every intimate, lovely, and pleasurable moment that we experienced before this supposed dead end.

If this ideology continues to persist, sex becomes performative rather than pleasurable. With orgasm as intimacy's ultimate goal, it puts the pressure on a person to act a certain way during intercourse. Sex turns into an acrobatic act where we feel we must perform for our partners, rather than a beautiful, cooperative dance that can fulfill individual needs to completion — or not!

Though we can plot its course, the orgasm remains a somewhat mysterious physical phenomenon. (To this day, scientists are not entirely sure if the female climax is even correlated to conception.)

What we do know is that we are physiologically designed to feel pleasure. Our bodies want us to feel good. From the simple hug to kisses to orgasms. It's ultimately up to you what boundaries of touch you want to set — and what makes you feel good and beautiful.

You can spot Cat DeBacker (MANAJ '19) in any room by her use of curse words and winged eyeliner. She will also be showing off pictures of her two cats, Blanche and Stella.

Choose your own surrender

The many ways of being gay and Mormon. (Hint: They're all repressed.)

by C.T. Wright

Have you ever been told your virginity is like an ice cream cone? If you grew up religious, you probably heard that. According to legend, sex before marriage is like somebody licking that ice cream cone. That means that whenever you *do* get married, you're damaged goods. Nobody wants an already licked ice cream cone.

I guess I have to deal with going through life as a licked gay ice cream cone.

I'm openly gay. I'm also a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS), or Mormon Church. The first question I get when someone finds this out is, "Are you still Mormon?"

I'm not great at answering things. I talk a lot, backtrack, change my mind, and still end up saying very little. For my personal sanity, I have to leave it at "It's complicated." Mormonism is complicated. Mormonism in my life is complicated. Mormonism and sexuality, complicated.

The cause of these complications lies in Mormonism's cultural milestones. These are the expected milestones for LDS men:

Age 8: "Choose" to be baptized into the church.

Age 18: Serve a two-year mission before going to the Lord's school, Brigham Young University.¹

Between age 20 and 24: Get married in the temple, the sooner the better.

If you're 25 and unmarried, shame on you; you obviously didn't pray enough. You're a "menace to society."²

The plan leads to eternal happiness. The plan, honestly, isn't really hard.

Getting down to it, the toughest hurdle of all is the dating game. The fact that you have to remain chaste (including no masturbation) is one reason why Mormons get married so young. But goddamn if the road to marriage isn't filled with trials and tribulations like an annoying game. Here's the average dating life of a returned missionary:

Go on several first dates. Have a NCMO³ here and there. Meet a girl and think she's swell because she goes to church every week, has this strong countenance, totally isn't like other girls, likes your "fun and unique" first date idea, and holy hell!

She might be the one because you can tell her anything. Have a DTR⁴ conversation. She doesn't become your girlfriend. Resist urge to masturbate yourself to sleep. Feel immense guilt. Repeat a few times until you finally get the girl. Propose three months later and be married within the first year of knowing her. Congrats! You've won the game.

Let's look at Player Two and change the rules just for kicks. The average dating life of a *gay* returned missionary⁵:

Go on several first dates. Force yourself to have a NCMO with a girl. Lie to yourself about liking it. Rub one — or three — out while thinking about men. Feel immense guilt. Tell no one. Listen silently while you're told the church totally loves the gays but also being gay and having

Go on several first dates. Force yourself to have a NCMO³ with a girl. Lie to yourself about liking it. Rub one out while thinking about men.

gay sex are grotty and if you do it you're an apostate.

From the LDS website: "Like other violations of the law of chastity, homosexual activity is a serious sin. It is contrary to the purposes of human sexuality (see Romans 1:24-32). It distorts loving relationships and prevents people from receiving the blessings that can be found in

family life and the saving ordinances of the gospel." Pretend this doesn't affect you. Laugh along with your homophobic friends.

At this point the situation is more nuanced than I'm able to discuss in this space. Here are three possible and generalized outcomes:

ONE: You can be in or out of the closet for this one. Follow the rest of the

average path, end the game with having secret affairs with men for the rest of your life. Pretend to feel fulfilled.

TWO: Attempt to follow the average path but commit to a life of celibacy with the occasional NCMO. Pretend to enjoy life. Remember that if you slip up, you're more or less an apostate. Hopefully you don't try taking your own life.

THREE: Leave the church, have sex, hopefully enjoy life.

There's a heavy focus on families in the LDS church, and being told that, if I start one with another man, I'll be an apostate is a sharper jab than just your extended family hating on you. In the LDS church, everyone is family. The anxiety rises each time one of those members discovers your sexuality. Will they support you if you decide to get married? Are they a part of the majority that want you to stay celibate? Are they part of the faction who think you're possessed by the devil and want to pull some "Exorcist" shit?

There is no end in sight to this discussion, no end to the feelings it stirs up. There is no end to what I could write, there is no end to ... yup. (Sorry, that was an extremely Mormon joke.) There's no easy way to wrap this up because, as a Mormon, you also believe there *is no end*. I don't know if I believe that; the idea of eternity gives me the wiggins. But if it's true, there'll be no end to the time I have to think about this. But God and Jesus and the Holy Ghost will be there to answer some questions, so that'll be cool at least.



¹ Other (less) acceptable schools are BYU-Idaho or Hawai'i and Southern Virginia University

² It's a Mormon myth that Brigham Young said this, but that's false. More or less. Steve Young said something similar during a "60 Minutes" interview (the age he gave was 27). People ran with it. The easiest way to get someone to do something is to say it came from a prophet of God.

³ NCMO = non-committal make out

⁴ DTR = define the relationship

⁵ I never served a mission myself, but all the other cultural milestones were still expected.

Megyn Kelly, Mrs. Butterworth, Aunt Jemima, containers of any kind, small holes, his own family, a Victoria's Secret perfume bottle (any shape), two door knobs right next to each other, ripe cantaloupes, much of the produce aisle at Jewel, the tippy tops of fire hydrants, artificial intelligence bots like Alexa, Siri, Cortana, 21% of the Senate, 19% of the House of Representatives, a lot of horses, Betty Crocker™ cake and brownie mixes, a particularly curvy tree branch, his postal worker Jessica, my postal worker Terry, one half of ABBA, Tammy Lahren, Kellyanne Conway, the Art Institute of Chicago's impressionist galleries, that Jeff Koons sculpture of that woman in the bathtub that everybody gets too close to and then the proximity alarm goes, "beeeeeep," any Georgia O'Keeffe work, a dairy cow that's just ready to blow, the number 80085 lol, the interior of seedless citrus fruit, Hillary Clinton, anything that's been touched by Hillary Clinton (for other reasons), Hillary Clinton's friends and close associates, you know what just anybody at the Democratic National Committee basically, a television with basic and/or extended cable that has the naughty channels, domes, rotunda, gazebos, you, elevators where no one's there to push the button for you (which is most elevators), any reporter that's interested in anything to do with this whole Russia thing, the angel atop his "Christmas spruce" (his term, not ours), flowers, hula hoops, all public spaces, spoons and sporks but not forks, the National Football League championship trophy, Mrs. Fields, a Carole King concert, much of his own staff probably, the ghost of Marilyn Monroe, the play "Lysistrata," Betty White, Sandra Day O'Connor, the word "hot," the cast of "Looney Tunes," cacophonous mine shafts, the one Olsen twin because it's not two it's one who moves back and forth really fast to create an illusion of two people — we can't prove this but we know it's true, anyone's mom (that includes you, Sharon), large holes, imported goods from countries with names that are hard to pronounce, googly eyes, rubber squeeze coin purses, a clown nose, women's reproductive rights legislation, civil rights legislation, wage equality legislation, gun control legislation, renewable energy legislation, healthcare legislation, bottles of water where you have to suck the water out like a stupid infant, Disney princesses (IRL and/or animated), any word spelled with a double "o," the Target bullseye logo, the family planning aisle at Walgreens, anyone kneeling, you know what also just knees, ankles, wrists, napes of necks, crooks of elbows, undersides of chins, pacifiers, moist toilettes, holes with nothing in them, soft fabrics that you just wanna pet, Oprah, Ellen Degeneres, Beyoncé, Beyoncé's younger clone, scroll wheels on computer mice, touch screens, J.C. Penney clerks, unisex bathroom toilets, any cosmetics that come in a tube, himself, scarves (because they're "metrosexual"), above-ground tunnels, foods made with marshmallow fluff, figure skaters in costume, anything referred to as "sensual" or "ribbed," a Bop It™, loveseats of all kinds, jeans that are not blue, the romantic comedy category on Netflix, used loofahs, Karen's pantyhose drawer *~*ooohhhhhh*~*, his own legacy, anyone from France, flesh-toned Crayola crayons, the iPhone home button (that has now *mysteriously disappeared*), products containing any kind of milk, men making "that's what she said" jokes — but only because the joke has the word "she" in it, hermit crabs and herbs with a hard "h" (for the same reason), nautical knots displayed in bell jars, the color purple (the actual color, but also the novel), the next page, knobs some more, color-coded spreadsheets, the smell of lavender, the letter "v," anyone

wearing clothing that comes in two pieces, berets (but only the ones with the things on top), exfoliating body wash with microbeads, anything written by Bob Dylan, dentists, candy necklaces, Madonna the entertainer, anything sticky, the soundtrack to "Mamma Mia," anyone starting a fire the old fashioned way where you have to rub two sticks together or some shit, scalloped edged-stationery, anything packaged and sold by Martha Stewart, Martha Stewart too, a caucus of Republicans (for his *own good*), holes with stuff not quite all the way in yet, the sound someone makes while they're eating caramel, people who have critical thinking skills, fruit preserves, provocative tea kettles, fingerless gloves, maps that say YOU ARE HERE, blue state flags, headphone jacks when you really stop to think about it, anyone in the business of "making the world a better place," neon lights that bend, any movie rated over "G" and anyone with a body part that starts with the letter "G," all art, pens where you have

to click the clicker so the pen comes out of the hole so you can write with it, scientific reasoning, blowfish, the parts of the bible that don't specifically support homophobia, political context, cured game meat, moral grey areas, nursery rhymes, organic eggs (especially the brown ones), anything that has the potential to drip, Jeff Sessions because he's just *so small*, cups, jello, cups of jello, all types of squash, songs containing the word "freaky," magicians (because Satan), hats where the brim doesn't go all the way around, patterns that are just a little too "busy," bundt cakes, oven mitts, deep water, personal grooming devices, the eggplant emoji, donut holes, also the rest of the donut, lumber, the Bad Thoughts, wet clay, all estimated 125.9 million women in the United States of America, currency other than goat bones, complicated topics that require thoughtful responses, his self-flagellation whip that he's so affectionately nicknamed, "Father," facts, other men in the sauna looking at him kinda weird like maybe they wanna do stuff, deep V-neck sweaters, revealing coats, T-shirt guns but not regular guns, musical theaters (remember when he was booed at "Hamilton" lmao), Gloria Steinem, a whole thing of mint chocolate chip ice cream, critical space flight hardware that even has a big fucking sign on it stating DO NOT TOUCH, matching pom poms, his shadow, a juicy turkey just sitting there waiting to be stuffed, decorative gourds, balloons,

coconuts, anything "Monty Python," wavy lines, shag carpeting, our tax dollars, decision-making power about the future of education, mannequins that even slightly look like people, those same mannequins but wearing wigs, a hole that stuff comes out of, a river that splits into two different rivers and — on that note — fjords, depictions of Madonna but like as in Jesus' mom even though also the entertainer, open and closed parentheses right next to each other like this (), access to the World Wide Web, anything containing more than three colors in a row because that's a little much for Mikey, a watermelon with a hole in it, a warm quiche, Daniel Radcliffe's delicious asshole, his reflection in a freshly polished purity ring, the nuclear launch codes (god forbid), airplane seats with insufficient legroom because then his knees might touch *her* knees, ripe bananas, handles that require a tight grip, corn on the cob, corn off the cob, "the gays," faux fur, the number "8," Astroglide™, a pile of sticks, spices that are a medley of other spices, pictures of women that show anything below the neckline, curated content, loose glitter, his own thoughts, any more than two (2) pieces of toast on a plate, a black Santa Claus, prophylactics, and the book "The Giving Tree."

People, places, and things Mike Pence can't be alone with

by Annie Leue and Sevy Perez



At the Mister Chicago Leather 2017 competition, members of the leather community socialize during a break.



A member of the kink community enjoys being stepped on at Bondage-A-Gogo, a weekly event at Exit Bar.



Mistress Lady Lupe flogs one of her pets at Exit Bar's Bondage-A-Gogo.

In kink we trust

Chicago knows how to get its freak on

Photography by Juan Carlos Herrera

Though Los Angeles and San Francisco are frequently associated as being the birthplaces of the leather subculture, Chicago's kink history is rich. With a thriving sex dungeon scene (GD2, Continuum, The Studio), numerous unique sex shops (Egor's Dungeon, Taboo Tabou, Cupid's Treasure), and plenty of fetish bars and clubs (Jackhammer, Cell Block, Manhole, Exit), it's no wonder Chicago was voted kink.com's fourth kinkiest city two years ago.

Since the 1970s, Chicago has also been home to International Mister Leather, ones of the largest kink events in the country. Originally carried out as "Mr. Gold Coast" in the Gold Coast Bar, Chicago's premier leather joint, the competition made assless chaps and harnesses part of the neighborhood landscape.

And in 1991, during one of the worst years of the AIDS epidemic, Gold Coast owner Chuck Renslow



José Santiago Pérez (MFA '15), a "pet-time" staff member and curator, shows items stored in the basement of the Leather Archives and Museum.

founded the Leather Archives and Museum (LA&M) in honor of his late partner, artist Dom Orejudos. Renslow aimed to collect and document the artifacts and special histories of the leather, kink, and fetish communities he cared about. Today, the LA&M has eight galleries, a 164-seat theater, and much kinkiness to explore.

So how about it? Whether you're a newcomer to the scene or a seasoned professional, or if you're just horny for knowledge, Chicago has you covered. Educational resources, workshops, and classes like Kinky Kollege and

Next Generation are available to anyone ready to learn from the pros. (First tip: Skip "Fifty Shades of Grey.") If you're seeking the finest leather goods and toys or feel like exploring the boundaries of your sexual interests, Chicago is a kinky place to call home.

Juan Carlos Herrera (MA '18) is a Visual and Critical Studies student. Visual artist, curator, and bilingual writer, he's into road trips, drag kings, correspondence art, and estate sales.

Strange bedfellows



FRONT EXTERIOR OF HEFNER HALL at 1340 North State Parkway. March, 1986. Photo courtesy of School of the Art Institute of Chicago.



LIVING ROOM OF HEFNER HALL March, 1986. Photo courtesy of School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

How a school known for social practice wound up with the old Playboy Mansion.

by Grace Wells

The death of Playboy founder Hugh Hefner stirred up many feelings — namely, that he was a creepy old man with live-in sex slaves whose “sexual revolution” objectified women, negatively impacted depictions of female sexuality, and set unrealistic beauty standards. Playboy’s problematic history with the feminist movement is long, nuanced, and played a large part of the public response to Hefner’s death. Which is why I jumped at the opportunity to explore Hef’s ties to the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC). Rumors of Hef’s interest in SAIC had come up in the past, but I tried not to go down that investigative rabbit hole. That is, until I found an SAIC Tumblr claiming that the Playboy Mansion was owned by the school and functioned as SAIC’s first dorm building.

To my surprise, Playboy was founded in Chicago by Hef in 1953, not some sleazy corner of California as I had

through the porthole window while drinking Mai Tais in the grotto bar.” So a few lucky artists dipped their toes into the mansion’s sexy waters before it was filled with furniture.

And students lived in what were formerly the Bunny dorms. One Reddit user who claims to have helped SAIC evaluate the property states there was a passage of some kind — a tunnel or hallway — connecting these rooms to Hef’s, though SAIC hasn’t been able to confirm this.

There seems to be no clear reason why Hef loved SAIC so much, or why the school accepted the gift in the first place. When I asked why Hef would give SAIC a mansion for what amounted to \$50 despite never really attending the school, Martin simply said, “I don’t know.”

It’s rumored that Hefner took a female anatomy class at SAIC before pursuing a BA in Psychology at the University of Illinois, which would make sense as a

Playboy apparently served as an *amicus curiae* — an impartial adviser — in the Roe v. Wade case. In 1991, they featured transgender model Caroline “Tula” Cossey in a pictorial.

However, these actions don’t excuse a 2010 interview with the New York Daily News in which Hefner literally said women “are sex objects.” It certainly doesn’t negate the allegations of mistreatment and intense control brought by his former girlfriends. Just as Harvey Weinstein’s donations to the Democratic party had zero effect on his behavior towards women in Hollywood, Playboy’s political participation doesn’t excuse the sociopolitical impact of what it publishes.

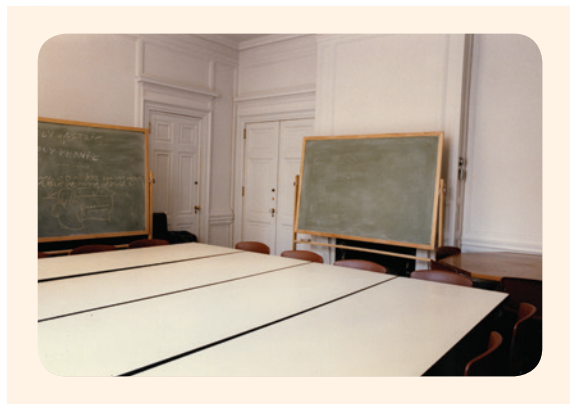
The whole thing seems odd, and not just because SAIC staff filled the pool with furniture. For starters, investigating the Playboy mansion proved a little underwhelming. The school lacks any serious documentation of their use of the



STUDENT BEDROOM AT HEFNER HALL March, 1986.
Photo courtesy of School of the Art Institute of Chicago.



ROOM 102'S SWIMMING POOL AT HEFNER HALL March, 1986.
Photo courtesy of School of the Art Institute of Chicago.



CLASSROOM AT HEFNER HALL March, 1986.
Photo courtesy of School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

previously assumed. In 1959, Playboy purchased 1340 N. State Parkway, and the 70 room, 3,000 square foot home became the original Playboy mansion. Its crown jewel was a basement grotto featuring a swimming pool with a glass wall and attached bar.

Hefner gave the mansion to SAIC in 1984 on the condition that they lease it for five years before gaining ownership. The yearly rent was \$10. Though the school sold the building to establish a scholarship fund in 1990, Hefner Hall was the beginning of SAIC’s Residence Life program.

Until Hefner Hall opened in 1985, all SAIC students lived independently: no dorms, no UPASS, no staying up all night in the 162 studio space. According to Dean of Student Life Felice Dublon, Hefner Hall is the reason SAIC has dorms at all. “It was so successful, we decided to leave Hefner Hall and open the 112 S. Michigan Hall,” said Martin.

Most of the original furniture and interior design remained untouched. “There was a walk-in fireplace,” said Dublon, “everything was wood inlay, students could not put anything on the walls.” (I’m still not sure what a walk-in fireplace is, or what purpose one would serve.)

Furniture, medieval armor, and a stereo system so nice that it scared people are just a few objects left behind by Hef. Though the school tried to avoid modifying the historic building, Hef’s sex den was not designed for a conceptual art school. Single bedrooms were turned into doubles, and according to Dublon, they “stored furniture in the pool.” Still, the 2015-2016 Annual Report released by the school claims they “threw a few parties for faculty and staff, swam under the fake grape clusters that hung down over the dreamy pool, and watched each other swim

motive for his donation. If you introduce a “men’s lifestyle” publisher to the clitoris, you get a mansion, right? But records of Hef’s time at SAIC are vague. A memo released in 1972 says Hef “attended the School part time, 1945-1946, 1951-1952,” but makes no mention of what courses he took. The registrar’s office only has record of him attending a figure drawing class in the summer of 1946.

Financial gain may have been SAIC’s motive for accepting Hef’s gift. When SAIC was offered the mansion, they knew that after five years the property would be given to them as a charitable donation. According to Dublon, the lease and donation were of financial benefit to Hef, as well.

The Chicago Tribune reported that the school purchased the property next door to the mansion for \$500,000, and spent \$100,000 altering the buildings before students moved in. After five years of leasing the mansion, it was given to the school and promptly sold. It’s unclear what the mansion’s value was at the time; the school claims the funds from the sale were used to create a scholarship. But with no trace of the fund or its value on the internet, it’s unclear who benefited.

Politically, it’s all complicated. I find it strange that such a progressive school would accept a gift from Playboy with seemingly no pushback from students. Gloria Steinem’s “A Bunny’s Tale” had been around 20 years by the time the school signed their lease for Hefner Hall. Feminist critique of Playboy had existed for years and it was understood that Playboy used women as objects of male pleasure and sexuality.

Playboy has been championed for its contributions to LGBTQ+ rights, abortion rights, and birth control.

mansion, and nobody in administration seems to remember much about the Hefner Hall years. If I leased the original Playboy mansion, you better believe I’d have an obnoxious number of photos and memorabilia.

Student Life and Student Affairs provided as much as they could in terms of photos and documents, and were quick to answer my questions. But the implications of using a Playboy property at a school with students so deeply connected to sexual equality seems to have been overlooked by the SAIC community as a whole.

In fact, an Idea Exchange talk hosted by Campus Life in 2013 featured Christie Hefner as a speaker and, according to Dublon, she was one of the most well-received speakers the school has had. Don’t get me wrong: I’m all for celebrating strong and successful business women and making art in ridiculous mansions, but at what cost? What are the implications of SAIC being connected to Playboy, especially considering a lack of any real connection to Hef?

The Playboy mansion is a beautiful building with a fascinating history. Given the opportunity, I would spend a night there (without Hef and with every intention of snooping around, of course.) I can’t say whether I’d accept a gift of that magnitude from a business like Playboy. What I *do* know is that Hefner and Playboy Enterprises exploited women, despite whatever positive contributions they may have made. 🍌

Grace is School News editor at F Newsmagazine. She didn’t know what else to put in her bio, so just picture her chugging coffee somewhere.



2017 has been colored by a seemingly neverending string of accusations of sexual assault perpetrated by powerful men across many industries. Men abusing their influence is not a new problem, but victims finding an unusually prominent place in the media's attention certainly is.

The nature of this shit storm had us attempting to make sense of the mess. This map was meant to create a coherent system of connections (through shared business dealings, political partnerships, personal friendships, etc.) between the many men accused of assault in these recent

months; however, the map remains unfinished, as does the process of healing and understanding as we wade through the chaos.

Irena is F's managing editor. She is incorrigible.



1. Weinstein produced Affleck's "Good Will Hunting" (1997) / 2. Weinstein produced Ratner's "Paid in Full;" pair have shared victim / 3. Hoffman was one of the producers of "A Walk on the Moon" (1999), Miramax was one of the production companies and US distributor / 4. Spacey starred in "The Shipping News," (2001) Miramax was the production company and US distributor / 5/6. Spacey, Masterson, and C.K. all have Netflix series / 7. C.K. was photographed by Richardson in 2013 for Rolling Stone Magazine/ 8. Franken and C.K. are both comedians; Franken is a former Saturday Night Live cast member and C.K. has appeared as a host numerous times / 9/10. O'Reilly and Halperin both had books published by Penguin Random House / 11. O'Reilly and Moore both align themselves with the Republican party / 12. Moore and Hoover are both GOP elected officials / 13. Steele and Halperin both work within the NBCUniversal sphere; Vox Media received financial support from the company / 14. Artforum repeatedly published coverage of the Armory Show while Landesman was publisher there / 15. Wieseltier worked for the New Republic before Fish

Designed Objects

students review

sex toys

Krutika Surve (aka America's sweetheart, aka the Eighth Wonder of the World) is an Indian American artist from Denver. She is studying Visual Communication Design at SAIC.

by Krutika Surve
Sure, sex toys are fun. But how do they hold up as designed objects? Have you ever considered the color, shape, size, and texture, and/or how it might fit in your hand? Will it be comfortable?
I decided to ask a few students in the School of the Art Institute of Chicago's (SAIC's) Designed Object Department. I asked them to critique a PowerPoint presentation I made that showed sex toys in all their glory.

The designers — we'll call them A, B, and C — were tasked with critiquing the objects first solely based on their appearance and design. Then, I gave the students a description of each object and allowed them to reevaluate their analysis based on their new understanding of the object.
Here's what happened.

FIRST IMPRESSION

A: That's definitely a sex toy.
C: Its shape is interesting. Because on one hand, you have this realistic penis and on the other, you get a vibrator. So it has two uses!
A: I don't know how you would hold it. I don't know where your hand would fit.

OBJECT



"TANTUS REALDOE SLIM VIBRATING DOUBLE DILDO"

"With a realistic insertable on one side and a vibrator on the other, the Tantus Realdoe Slim Vibrating Double Dildo is bound to give you a pleasurable experience."

CRITIQUE

B: Also, it doesn't seem like there is much mobility with it.
A: It only seems to fit certain people as well — you'd have to be in proportion to use it.
C: Yeah, it feels somewhat uncomfortable to make it cater to the natural curves of a body. It's also got a white skin tone. And veins.

C: It's kind of got this industrial design to it. Very syringe-like.
B: Like something you would find in the woodshop.
A: The graphic makes it seem more instructional and tool-like. It has numbers to the side over here.



"BATHMATE HERCULES HYDROPUMP"

This object is made to increase blood flow. That means temporary enlargement, ya'll! This product also has a suction feature to increase sensitivity and stimulation.

C: Oh, okay. So, it is a sex toy. It's a suction one.
A: Ew.
B: The design of it doesn't seem to be playful at all.

A: Okay, well it looks like a dildo. So I'm going to go with masturbation for its use?
B: Yeah, it kind of looks like a butt plug.



"PRISMS AUM GLASS DILDO"

The Prisms AUM Glass Dildo features six small bulges and one big seventh bulge. This glamorous piece is safe for your body and is insertable. It's made of polished glass, as well! You can warm it up or cool it down for instant stimulation.

C: The fact that it's made out of glass is interesting; it says you can warm it up or cool it down.
A: That kind of weirds me out, actually.
B: It can be easier to clean. Which is convenient, I guess. And smart.
C: It doesn't seem to have a handle or anything which makes it a little awkward.

A: That looks like a toilet plunger, like right away. But with no handle. But it can be like something that goes on your nipples? Cause the theme is sexy?
B: Yeah, it does look like a toilet plunger. Or to stick to the rest, maybe like a vaginal thing. Like a p*ssy suction thing?



"TANTUS SILICONE SUCTION CUP ACCESSORY"

This object is made to be used with your dildo or anal plug. This suction cup sticks to any flat surface. Stick to your wall, tile, glass mirrors. And then you can use your sex toy hands free! This allows you to use your hands for other things. Like reading a book or playing a board game with your S.O.

C: So it's not [necessarily] made for anything sexual. Like, the product alone is not sexual. But if you use it with something, then it is.
A: I mean, I guess it has the same principles as a toilet plunger. Just stick it anywhere.

B: The color and curvature of the shape make me think of a tongue.
C: It looks like a beetroot.
A: It looks like a bougie beach chair.
B: The ridges are interesting.



"TENGA IROHA PLUS VIBRATOR"

This vibrator is a silicone-based insertable shaped to fit the curves of your body. It's wireless and can last up to an hour. Also, it's waterproof!

B: It's insertable? That doesn't make any sense!
B: Could the shape help conform to the body, though?
C: But it's chunky. You can't hold it right, let alone insert it anywhere. It's a "no" for me.
B: I would need a picture from another angle. [The item] might be skinnier than how it looks in this picture.
C: Everything else in this PowerPoint is sleek and slim. This is not.

B: Is it an anal bead?
C: What — like just one?
B: I don't know. It looks like a bead to me. If it is a sex toy, it's really discreet.
A: Because it looks like an egg, it [strikes me as] very animal-like. I automatically associate those two together. It feels organic and natural. The color is also not a solid color, it's multi-toned. It feels very natural, kind of spiritual.
C: Yeah, like those hippie minerals. The "this helps you sleep" stuff.
B: Also, the color is pink which is automatically associated with femininity which seems to be the theme with a lot of sex toys.

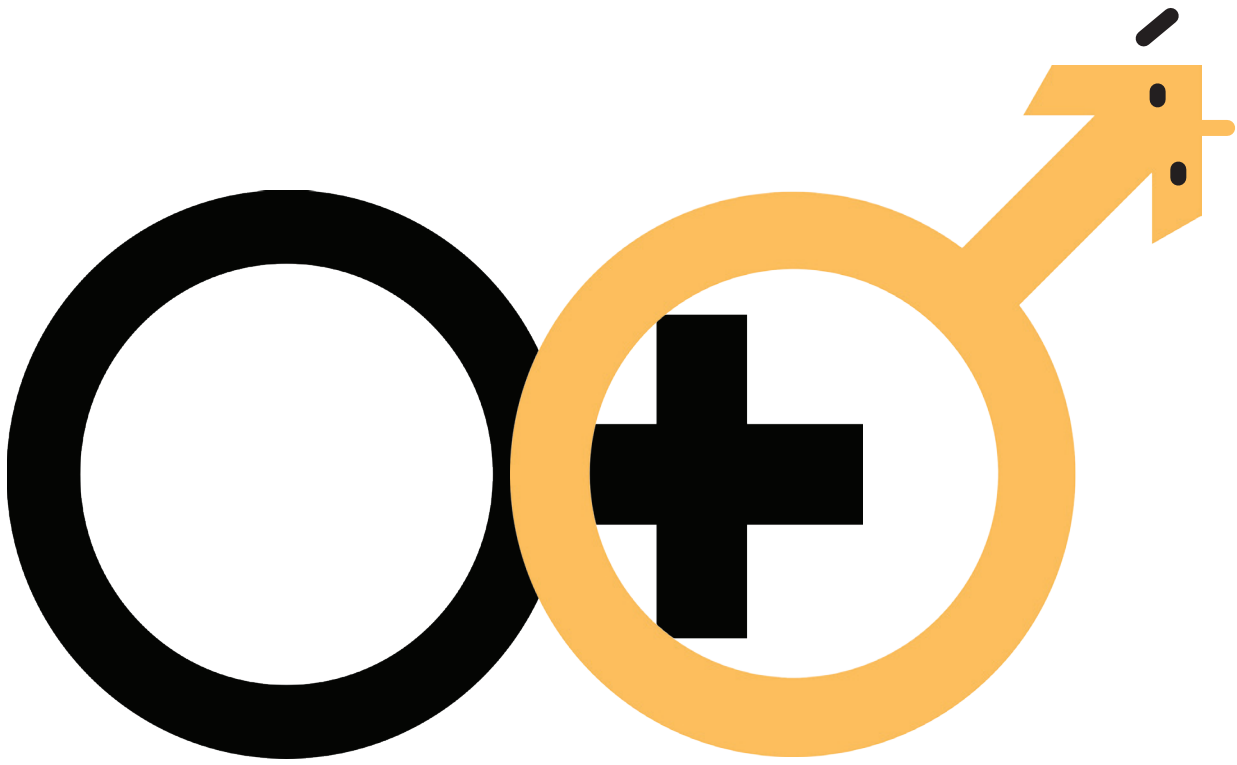


"CHAKRUBS ROSEBUD YONI EGG"

This egg is used for kegel exercises to strengthen your vaginal muscles. Made out of rose quartz, this egg is said to channel energies of compassion and peace. It's created to heal and nourish, as well as calm you down.

C: That sounds like bullshit.
A: How do you even go about doing that? Is it even a sex toy? Or just something to promote better sex?
B: Yeah, because it tightens your vag.
A: Yeah, but I don't understand how. Like do you just stick it up there? It's just an egg.
C: I think you are to use it before or something? But the shape of it does not seem like it is easy to use. I feel like my hand would cramp or I would get carpal tunnel or something.

‘Peg’: Liam Fitzgerald’s theatrical sexperiment



by Sarah Miller

In local playwright Liam Fitzgerald’s new play, “Peg,” a thirty-something couple explores unfamiliar sexual experiences specifically, pegging. For individuals unfamiliar with the concept, pegging is typically defined as a sexual act during which a woman penetrates a man’s anus with a strap-on dildo.

F Newsmagazine recently sat down with Fitzgerald to talk about his provocative play.

SARAH MILLER: What was your initial attraction to the subject of pegging?

FITZGERALD: I was interested in the reversal of heterosexuality. As a straight man, I look at theatre and I look at art, and I see little exploration on what it is to be heterosexual. I decided to explore being straight as a concept. If you think about homosexuality logically, it makes sense. You have a connection with a partner of the same sex, whereas a heterosexual interaction involves two innately opposite individuals with non-problematic inequalities. Not to say that we should be exploring one [type of] sexuality over others. It’s just something I’m asking about.

I chose [to examine] pegging because it embodies all of these stigmas on gender, and the concept of the penetrator versus the penetrated. I mean, pegging is the queerest straight activity. Throughout my research [I dealt with] the concept of conflict in sexuality. There are sexual acts that feel good and don’t hurt anyone, or things that feel good and slightly hurt, but if done in a safe way are really enjoyable.

But there are so many societal rules that coincide with these acts. There is sexual pleasure and there is sexual stigma, and the United States has a history of downplaying sexual pleasure. Butt play is perceived as a huge hurdle. Pegging is a combination of the two strongest sexual stigmas for men: female dominance and having things in your butt.

MILLER: Can you speak a little about your writing process and the ways you researched gender and sexuality for “Peg”?

FITZGERALD: With “Peg,” it was rather difficult to find non-kink related information because [pegging] has that Dominant/submissive element to it. Digging through material that is about non-procreative sex is really fucking difficult because it is all put through that lens. For me it’s all about what the reality is behind this. I was interested in couples I knew who had done this or [had at least] talked about it. Pegging is the new butt plug. Couples are trying it. I talked to a lot of people and a few friends led me to the kink community so I could understand what makes a couple reluctant to try pegging, what that conversation was about. When I talk to peggers in real life, it’s always the female partner who’s the driving force, they’re the ones who want to peg, not the men.

MILLER: Has sexuality been a theme in your previous plays?

FITZGERALD: A lot of my work centers around questions of gender and what gender means for contemporary people. A lot of my plays deal with characters trying to figure out where they fit within traditional male and female expectations and narratives in a period of sexual de-regulation.

MILLER: How is “Peg” different?

FITZGERALD: “Peg” is much more sex-focused than much of my other work, and part of that just comes from me writing the kind of plays that I want to see. The vast majority of us will have sex at some point in our lives; the vast minority will commit murder. But the theatre is filled with acts of violence and rarely explores sex outside of “white-coded hetero hero gets the hetero-girl next door, then lights fade right before they have missionary sex.” Well, there’s also rape and assault [depicted], which is more violence than sex.

There seems to be very high bar for depicting consensual sex in theatre. I wanted to create something that would challenge that, sidestep that bar. Because the play’s sex acts are all centered around an artificial phallus, it allows me to push the audience — and the laws surrounding sex in a performance — way further than they would normally be willing to go.

Also, in our current cultural moment of discovering the full damage from decades of unchecked rape culture in the arts industry, we need to see narratives about sex that aren’t predatory. For many people right now, the impulse is to just do a factory recall on all sex, just clear everything for safety’s sake. That’s an understandable impulse, but art going celibate isn’t going to fix anything. Sex is one of the most important parts of our lives, and one of our strongest drives as people — at least, for most of us. We need to see and discuss stories that explore the complications of sex, the weird, non-vanilla, potentially scary sex, and how to maintain consent while partaking in things that terrify us.

One of the goals for me in writing “Peg” was to show two characters struggling to maintain a consensual environment while dealing with scary, intimidating sexual acts and communication wrapped up in maintaining their ego.

MILLER: So why “Peg,” now?

FITZGERALD: I wanted to push myself. It’s scary for me as a writer to put overt sex acts on stage. There are so many

pitfalls in the attempt to depict it in a funny-yet-positive way, and I am 100 percent certain I will fuck up in some major way. My “career-minded” impulse is to have [the actors] dive under the covers and cover it up so no one gets upset and I don’t have to ask an actor to expose themselves in that way.

But as I said before, sex is a fundamental part of our lives. To exclude it just because it’s difficult is disingenuous at best. I’m young, no one really knows who I am, and I’m working with friends who I trust to call me out when I shit the bed, if you will. And if I’m confident of anything, it’s that I will shit the bed in some way. But as with any artistic endeavor, if it’s not scary, it isn’t worth doing.

MILLER: Could you talk about live performance as a medium to carry your concepts?

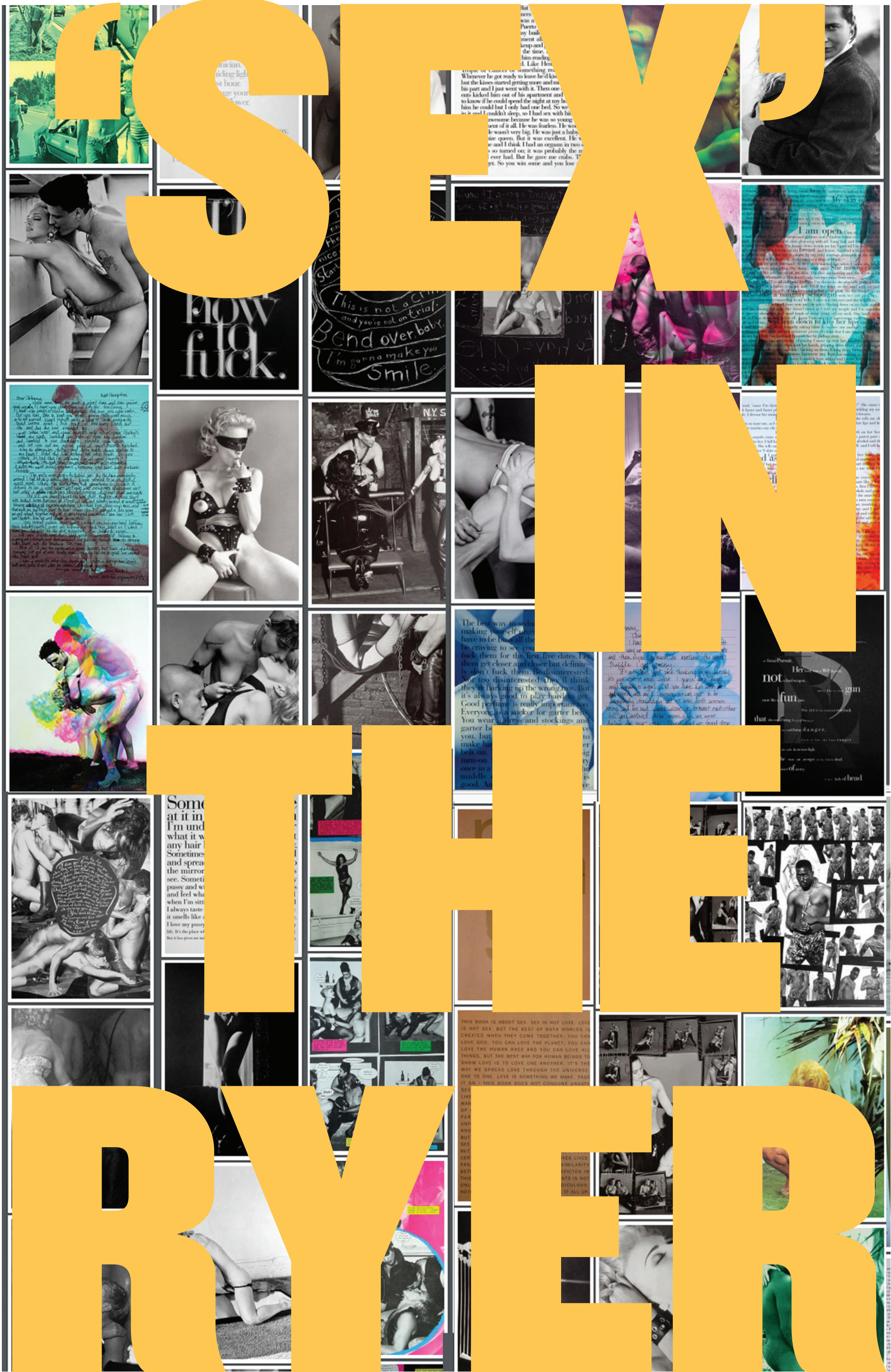
FITZGERALD: With a live performance, it is impossible to disengage from an uncomfortable situation. Live performance challenges sex and nudity. On Netflix, if there’s a couple fighting or something I don’t like, I can fast forward. But there is no way to censor a performance. I am forcing the audience to confront a situation through the medium of discomfort. [It’s also] a hyper-risky thing [which requires] extreme caution in regards to safety with the performers.

MILLER: How does humor play a role in “Peg”?

FITZGERALD: I think that the incorporation of humor in my work also helps me move away from the hyper-seriousness stigma of sex, and toward that playful, fun element. I mean, I want the audience to be entertained by the plot. Pegging is fun, and it is a funny concept. I want my work to allow people to explore sex in a comical way. It’s the spoonful of sugar that allows the public to have an easier time receiving such a serious concept. I found it kind of hard to write a show about sex without throwing a few dick jokes in there.

A staged reading of “Peg” will debut at Broken Nose Theatre in January 2018.

Sarah Miller is a first year photography student at SAIC. She is passionate about writing and hopes to pursue a career in photojournalism.



CONSIDERING MADONNA'S NAUGHTY BOOK, 25 YEARS LATER

by Mary Fons

Twenty-five years ago, Madonna drop-kicked pop culture with a project so bold, so unabashedly “fuck you,” it’s still considered by many to be the most radical moment in pop music history. Twenty-five years ago, Madonna made a very naughty book called “Sex.”

I was 14 years old in 1992, and an insatiable Madonna fan, my bedroom plastered with posters for “Desperately Seeking Susan” and Madge’s “Blonde Ambition” tour. But my idol’s newest reinvention was not tween-friendly. Mom barely let me buy “Erotica,” the album released concurrently with “Sex,” but as for getting a peek at the book, no way.

And though my love for Madonna deepened over the years and I came across a few of the book’s tamer images in media from time to time, for some reason I had never gotten around to getting my hands on a copy of “Sex.”

When I heard about the book’s 25th anniversary, I knew it was time. Not only could I handle the content at this point (and how!), it would be neat to view the book in light of its 25th birthday. Being a student this year at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC) was lucky, too; surely a copy of the provocative book would be available for me at the Flaxman. It’s just the kind of freaky-sexy thing SAIC would own.

“Sorry,” the librarian said when I called. “We don’t have it.” My heart sank. Then I heard some keyboard clacking and the librarian spoke again.

“Looks like there’s a copy at the Ryerson.”

I immediately grabbed my coat and headed across the street. I was going to lose my “Sex” virginity at one of the most beautiful libraries in the country, inside one of the grandest art museums on the planet. Nice! And though it took gumption to ask the soft-spoken Ryerson librarian to fetch the book for me, within a few minutes, I found myself sitting alone at a broad, lacquered table, turning page after page of “Sex,” crossing and uncrossing my legs.

OH YES SHE DID

You could say “Sex” is a fancy, porny photo album. But that’s too easy. At 134 oversized, gritty pages, spiral-bound with a metal cover and wrapped in a sealed, silver mylar bag, I realized “Sex” is a freakin’ artist’s book, of all things. Now it made sense why “Sex” is part of the Ryerson collection, not Flaxman’s.

And because the hot pics and sexy text are the first things most people notice or care about with “Sex,” it’s never really been appreciated that Madonna took a freakin’ artist book mainstream. “Sex” sold 1.5 million copies — 150,000 in the U.S. on the first day alone. (She should’ve called it “Hotcakes.”) Most artists’ books are lucky to have a print run of a couple hundred; Madge’s creation hit the New York Times’s bestseller list. For this feat, Madonna should get points, whatever you think of the art itself.

Now about that art. Madonna is certainly not the first person to make a fancy, porny photo album. Robert Mapplethorpe’s “XYZ Portfolio” was full of seriously naked, seriously sexin’ queer folk. Artists like Helmut Newton and Annie Sprinkle had covered or were covering the same territory. Madonna has made a career out of recycling — and yes, appropriating — cultural moments that have come before.

But I maintain that “Sex” gets credit for doing something new: It unapologetically, proudly flooded the mainstream with non-gender-binary queer sex, slut positivity, and visuals from medium-core BDSM culture. Consider that “Sex” was available at Sam Goody record stores in suburban shopping malls across America. This was new.

In picture after well-lit picture, “Sex” presents gender-queer people licking each others’ nipples; leather daddies riding on the backs of their submissives; hot girl-on-girl action; pee stuff; butt stuff; and a banquet of other “scenes” that until that point were available only at artsy bookstores in New York City or wedged into smut shelves at creepy sex shops. With the arrival of “Sex,” folks from Modesto to Duluth were suddenly aware that sex could be an outlet for creativity, a place where you could be a little (or a lot)

gay, an enjoyable activity that could take place in exciting locations. And it wasn’t just adults who were having revelations. Yeah, you technically had to be 18 to buy “Sex,” but any high-schoolers who could get their hands on a six pack of Zima in 1992 could get their hands on “Sex,” — and you can bet plenty of them did.

There are serious problems with elements of the book; I’ll get to those. But a quarter century later, “Sex” remains a leviathan among historic moments in Western pop culture. It was arguably a two steps forward, one step back deal, but in the fight to unclench the Puritanal vice grip on sexuality in America, isn’t it always just one step at a time?

LET’S TALK ABOUT ‘SEX’

It’s hard to dispute the fact that the book is just objectively gorgeous. With sleek art direction by Fabien Baron and photographs by fashion photographer Steven Meisel, if you’re down with the subject matter, “Sex” is a pleasure to behold. The topic itself might be dirty, but Madonna and her collaborators made sure each image was polished to gleaming in every black-and-white or neon-toned spread. This is some squeaky-clean filth.

“Sex” is not all pictures, though. Roughly 20 percent of the big book is text, much of it rendered in that scratchy, hand-scrawled font so ubiquitous in early 90s media. (Remember the video for Pearl Jam’s “Jeremy”? That font.) Written erotica can be a lot of fun, but the text is the weakest part of “Sex.” Madonna details various fantasies or writes to a fictional lover, lamely named “Johnny.” Let’s face it: Mediocre writing can’t compete with boobs. So I mostly skimmed those parts.

On the whole, the book reads as a kind of visual record. You press play on “Sex” and as one song ends, another begins. For a few pages, you’re with Madonna as she makes out with a hot, androgynous couple, one of whom has a Star of David etched into her right shoulder blade; now you’re inside a biker bar where our girl is perched on a pinball machine, receiving oral sex from a Hell’s Angel; now you’re seeing Madonna in a posh hotel room, *in flagrante* with a young blonde male; now a sub is licking her boot; now you’re looking at Madonna smoking cigarettes and vamping — naked of course — in someone’s Malibu backyard.

Perhaps a better, sexier way to understand the experience of the book, though, is to consider it a visual facsimile of the way fantasies play out in our heads. Like when we’re having, shall we say, “an intimate moment.” Some arousing scenario alights on the brain, then it’s abandoned for another, then another, all those hot images shifting, morphing from one to the next until ... Well, until your lil’ intimate moment has concluded. If you catch my drift.

“Sex” presents us with what Madonna thinks about — or, at least, what she wants us to *think* she thinks about — during her own intimate moments. And you’ve got to give her credit for queering up the place while she’s at it. From pool frolics with artist Isabella Rossellini to the rollicking good time Madonna seems to be having with a pack of leashed men backstage at a gay peepshow, there is a ton of non-straight, albeit simulated sex going on here. I’m giving her an A- in the blasting heteronormativity category, though; after all, she could’ve done the entire book as one big queer elegy. But she did pretty good.

However, no one is more bummed out than me to report that not all of what’s happening in Madonna’s head is cute.

‘SEX’ REPORT CARD

Though “Sex” appears at first as a real body-positive romp, what with all those butts hanging out everywhere, it’s really only celebrating a specific kind of body. One thread that runs through every scene in the book is that absolutely everyone who got naked here is smokin’ hot. Whether her partners are gay males, cis women, gender-queer punks, macho hetero-presenting studs, or a blend of any of these, Madonna’s head is clearly only populated with Beautiful

People. And yeah, she explicitly states these are *her* fantasies, but it’s hard for a reader to, um, insert herself into any of it, since most of us have more than 2 percent body fat.

There’s also an excruciating moment of straight-up fat-shaming. Madonna writes she once had sex with an “overweight, not obese” person and ultimately decided that that wasn’t going to happen again because when she sees a fat person, all she thinks is “overindulgent pig.” Damn, girl.

In terms of how consent-y “Sex” feels, it’s complicated. Madonna calls everyone to practice safe sex in the first pages of the book, which is a good sign: After all, if you’ve got the wherewithal to get out a condom or other safe-sex accoutrement before you get it on, it’s assumed that you and your partner(s) have agreed to be there. But in the Malibu section, Madonna is pictured kneeling over a dog — a dog! — and we are meant to assume there’s either been some contact or there’s about to be. If you subscribe to Dan Savage’s rules, the only sex you can never, ever have is sex with children or animals because they can’t consent. Madonna also says on the first page that “None of this is real. I made it all up.” But these days, with so much exposure of systemic sexual harassment and sexual violence in our society, the rapey scene in the high school gym felt particularly lead balloon-y.

In the final third of the book, Madonna returns to a pool (she’s super into water), this time with supermodel Naomi Campbell and hip-hop legend Big Daddy Kane. There are issues. To start, Kane looks sorta confused as to why he’s there, and the photographers have somehow managed to make Campbell, one of the most expressive models ever, look bored. But maybe these pictures are weird because Madonna is practically megaphoning “I’M DOING SEX WITH BLACK PEOPLE, NOW.” The Campbell/Kane scene feels like Madonna fetishizing people based on some exotic stereotype, and, as F Newsmagazine’s arts editor pointed out, the setting looks “a bit jungly.”

Aside from a shot of Madge putting lipstick on one of her male dancers, a young man of seemingly Asian descent, and a Domme-y pic featuring a person of color, you won’t find a lot of integrated diversity, here. In other words, “Sex” ain’t lily-white, but it’s suuuuper white.

25 YEARS, STILL ON TOP

As I flipped through the pages of “Sex” in the Ryerson, I took notes. I wrote “super gross re: other-ing” and “fat shaming, wtf?!” But I also wrote things like “omg i love her so much!!!!,” and “#queen” and “#balls.”

When Madonna released “Sex,” critics from every corner of pop culture licked their chops and gleefully predicted the depraved, megaslut’s career was over. They gloated and waited for the high-heeled shoe to drop. But if the haters are still around at all, and most aren’t, they’re amending their original reviews. “Sex” didn’t gouge Madonna’s career. Rather, it was Madonna who performed a kind of surgery on culture, excising masses of nasty inhibitions with a single paper cut. She definitely suffered backlash. Many fans bailed. But she gained new fans and never lost her die-hard base (see: me.) “Sex” didn’t hurt Madonna. She performed the Half-Time show at the 2015 Superbowl. Doesn’t get more mainstream than that.

Even with the oceans of internet porn around, you’re not gonna find much that’s aesthetically-pleasing. To visit the Ryerson Burnham Library and open up “Sex” is to therefore have a threefold experience: You get to lose yourself in fantasies (even if they’re Madonna’s); you get to look at sexy pics the old-fashioned way, aka, offline; and you get a serious dose of artful porn. Have you literally ever seen any? Ever? This is reason enough to go across the street as soon as possible.

You’re not allowed to keep much stuff with you when you look at books at the Ryerson, but you can have your phone. Bring it, so you can sext your boo — or yourself, for later.

Mary Fons is managing editor of F Newsmagazine.

6 famous beds in art history

Beds. Most of us have got 'em.

by Irena Frumkin

Some come in wooden frames, some feature luxurious canopies; others, like mine, are literally just a mattress on the cold hard floor of a freezing Chicago apartment. Whatever the configuration, beds are metaphorical. They represent the most intimate, vulnerable moments of our lives, from sleep to sex, from illness to just fucking depression-napping at three in the afternoon while Bojack Horseman blares from your partially opened laptop. Beds are both sites of great passion and the places where we find ourselves when we don't want others to find us. It's no wonder so many artists have utilized bed imagery in their work.

Irena is F Newsmagazine's managing editor. She is incorrigible.



TRACEY EMIN, "MY BED," 1999

One of the most notorious bed-focused contemporary art pieces of all time, "My Bed" serves as Emin's self-portrait following a traumatic, emotionally devastating breakup and subsequent breakdown. Who doesn't know the feeling of emerging from your boudoir after a particularly rough time and noticing all the accumulated, leftover physical evidence? (Except maybe you and your healthy coping mechanisms, Karen.)



VINCENT VAN GOGH, "BEDROOM IN ARLES," 1888/9

The bedroom so nice, he painted it twice. (Three times, actually.) The superstar Dutch Post-Impressionist's iconic interior is one of the most recognized beds in art history. In 2016, the Art Institute of Chicago created a replica of the chamber, which was available to rent out through Airbnb.



FRIDA KAHLO, "THE DREAM (THE BED)," 1940

Kahlo is known for using beds to represent tragedy and pain; a catastrophic trolley accident early in her life meant the artist spent many agonizing days in hers over the years. "The Dream" is a somewhat more humorous take on a memento mori, with a skeleton tangled up in dynamite lying above the sleeping painter. It could all blow up at any time. In real life, Kahlo did have a papier-mâché skeleton named Juda atop the canopy of her bed.



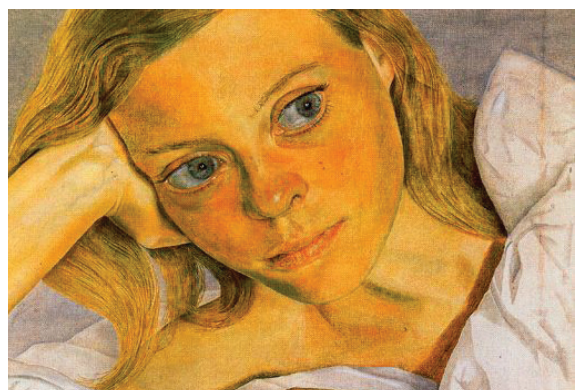
EDWARD HOPPER, "MORNING SUN," 1952

Rendered in Hopper's usual contemplative, borderline-voyeuristic style, "Morning Sun" is a lonely scene of a young women in bed, greeting the just-dawning day outside the window of her barren room. She might be thinking, "How early is too early to order Chinese food?" Or, "Why do white male artists hate women so much?" We can't know.



MICHELANGELO PISTOLETTO, "BED," 1976

One in a series of the Italian artist's furniture sculptures, "Bed" looks like something waiting for you in that suspiciously cheap, "fully furnished" Edgewater studio you found on Chicago Queer Exchange. As a leading artist of the Arte Povera movement, Pistoletto often appropriated "low" and common objects in his works. That's a bed for you: low and common.



LUCIAN FREUD, "GIRL IN BED," 1952

If you Google image search "Girl in Bed," the results are almost entirely NSFW stock photos. The above entry isn't actually much different, except it's an expensive piece of fine art. The subject is writer Lady Caroline Blackwood, the only woman said to have broken Lucian Freud's heart. This introspective portrait of her in Paris following their elopement is considered to be one of the artist's best.

Programmable love

In 'My Sex Robot,' the downcast seek to upload love

by Cat DeBacker

There are so many ways to get off. Today's technological advances and the vast resource that is the internet provide infinite possibilities for masturbation. Just when you think you've adjusted to new levels of porn and complicated eroticisms, something new pops up.

"My Sex Robot," a 45-minute British documentary now streaming on Netflix, follows two engineers and three fembot enthusiasts around the United States. Collectively, they're striving to make their dreams and fetishes a reality with the genesis of the world's first sex robot.

Two of the enthusiasts, Delosian and Keizo, are both healing from troubled pasts. Delosian, a video game tester, developed his interest in robots as a child. For him, it was "intriguing that [a robot] could look so human and not be human at all." Delosian would have his sex robot programmed to act as a companion, to know what he liked and didn't like. Healing from a broken heart, Delosian admits that there is an appeal to the concept of owning a slave; in other words, a man taking charge of another entity. To him, it's a kind of relief: Robots can't break your heart, they can't leave you because of "emotional issues."

Keizo, an artist, was bullied throughout his childhood for his mixed Japanese and Mexican heritage. For him, the draw of fembots lie in their indestructible nature, "a partner that can fire alongside you." Facing so much rejection in his youth resulted in decreased self-confidence. In theory, a sex robot provides the security of human relationships without the complications of humanity.

Both men crave an infallible partner, someone who would want them without acknowledging or rejecting their flaws — as an object without flaws. Delosian and Keizo's past experiences with (and fear of) rejection have distanced them so far from desiring human connections that their solution to the problem is avoiding them. Instead, they could have perfect, uncomplicated relationships with the perfect specimen: a robot.

Proponents' argument for the creation of such objects is that a sex robot would be able to provide emotional stability, an outlet for a longing that they've been ashamed of and have hidden from their friends and family.

In a poignant scene, Keizo opens up to two of his friends about his fembot fetish, hoping to relieve the burden of what he feels is something he "shouldn't be ashamed of," and to generate the possibility to have this object in his life "without being afraid of judgement."

Alexis, a female friend, raises a legitimate concern: "If it looks like a real woman, if it feels like a real woman, how

is that not going to distort how they think real woman are supposed to be? Then they disconnect from wanting to be with a real woman because their robot woman would be perfect. So, it does make me a little nervous — but if it makes them happy who is it really harming?"

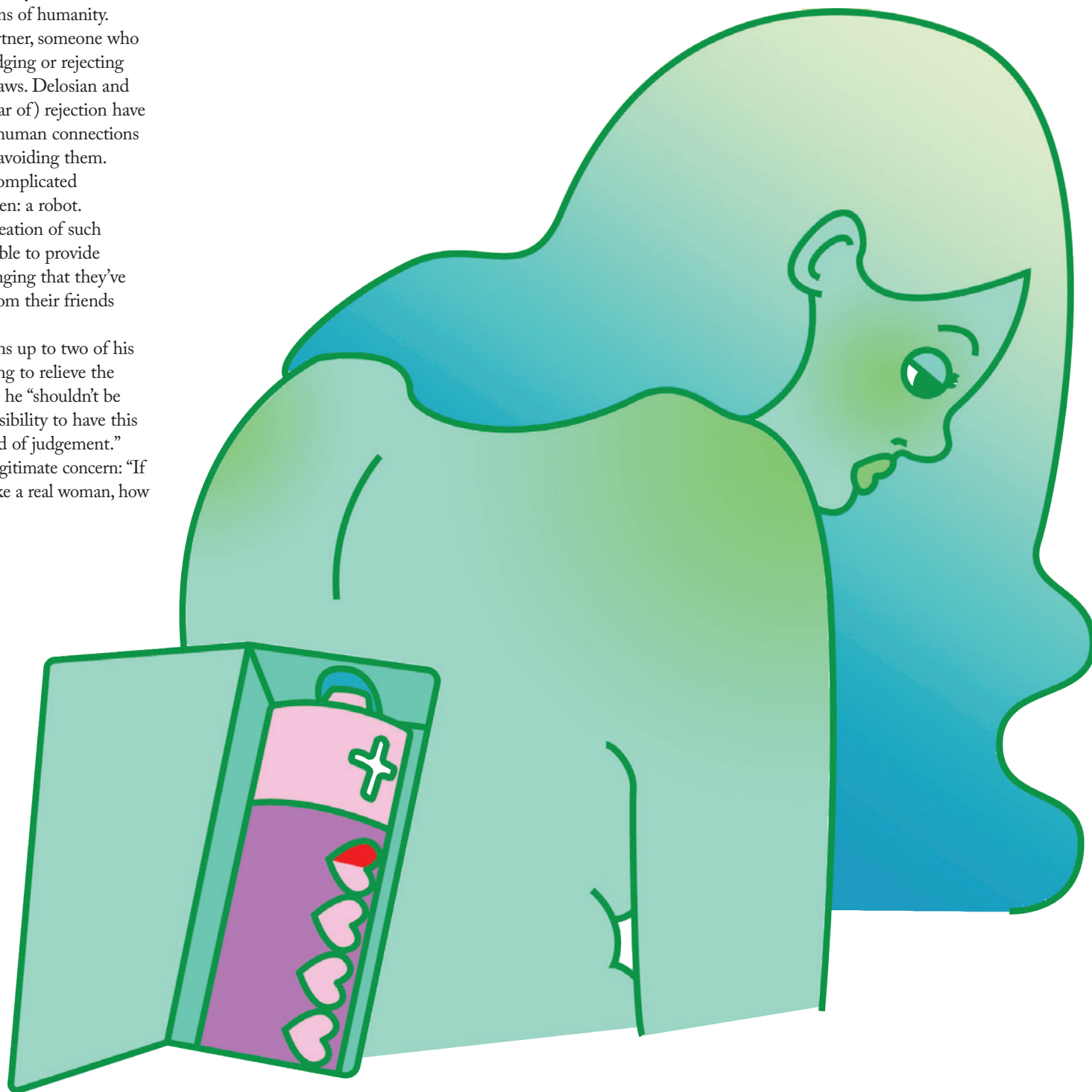
What is the line between a sex toy and a comfort object? Like a child carrying around a blanket when they're small, using it as a protective agent and method of control in their environment, the sex robot becomes a strange self-masturbatory barrier between grown men and real life.

It's easy to understand the desire for such an object. Who wouldn't want a faux-human you could fuck that tells you how wonderful and attractive you are, then allow itself to be powered off and put away? Nice, simple, and satisfying — but there is no growth in that kind of relationship, no challenge. How could these one-sided relationships fulfill the need for human interaction? Could these men truly believe that these robots love them? Like Keizo himself says about Roxie, a beta-version of the world's first sex robot: "It's a doll with a tape recorder."

Can such an object replace humanity? Can a sex robot replace love?

You can spot Cat DeBacker (MA NAJ '18) in any room by her use of curse words and winged eyeliner. She will also be showing off pictures of her two cats, Blanche and Stella.

In theory, a sex robot provides the security of human relationships without the complications of humanity.



Hot/not

From ancient poems, paintings and sculptures, to the contemporary mediums of television and film, artists have always been interested in depicting the act of “doing it.” Unfortunately, like most media in Western society, modern-day sex scenes are often grounded entirely in heteronormativity. These scenes effectively ignore any kind of sexual relationship that exists outside of the one man one woman arrangement.

When it comes to art and, more specifically, film and television, this erasure negatively impacts what we consider beautiful, acceptable, natural, and “normal.” To buck that trend, here is a list of IO incredible, decidedly non-heteronormative sex scenes from television and movies.

Jose Nateras (MFAW '18) is a self-described writer/actor/nerd.

“THE HANDMAIDEN” (2016)

In Chan Wook Park’s moody story of lies and manipulation, young Sook-Hee gets in over her head as she attempts to con the sheltered Lady Hideko and her lecherous Uncle Kouzuki. Park brings stunning imagery, pitch black humor, and stark violence to what ultimately unfolds as a sensual and erotic psychological thriller, featuring a number of jaw-droppingly hot sex scenes between Lady Hideko and Sook-Hee.



SENSE8 (2015-2018)

Created by the Wachowski siblings (“The Matrix” movies), this groundbreaking Netflix original series tells the tale of a cluster of Sensates: eight individuals from all over the globe who share psychically-linked minds. The cast — an inclusive, diverse group — is also really hot. While there are frequently sexy, non-hetero sex scenes in “Sense8,” Episode Six wins for a scene where straight men, straight women, a trans lesbian, and a gay man all have psychic (but very physical) sex together. Hot AF.



BLUE IS THE WARMEST COLOR (2013)

French director Abdellatif Kechiche made a splash when both of his lead actresses were officially awarded the Palme d’Or at the Cannes Film Festival, an award usually only given to directors. Based on the comic book “Le Bleu Est Une Couleur Chaude” by Julie Maroh, Kechiche’s film manages to capture onscreen the book’s intense intimacy and eroticism. The film earned an NC-17 rating here in the U.S., so it’s got to be good, right?



WEEKEND (2011)

Andrew Haigh (HBO’s “Looking”) depicts a fleeting romance between the film’s two central characters, Russell (Tom Cullen) and Glen (Chris New), as they spend a weekend together after meeting in a club. Yes, the sex scenes in “Weekend” are hot, but more than anything, the film captures the duality of single gay life: the excitement of meeting new guys — and the hardship of searching for connection in a hookup culture.



WET HOT AMERICAN SUMMER (2001)

Over the course of David Wain’s hilarious ode to summer camp, the sexual tension between various heterosexual couples builds. But it’s the almost out-of-nowhere sex scene between Ben (Bradley Cooper) and McKinley (Michael Ian Black) that most stands out. Intended as a gag, the scene between the two guys gets handled with surprising and genuine sensuality. The joke isn’t the sex or the gay characters, but the obtuseness of other adolescent boy characters whose inept sexual conversation underscores the very hot, very real sex going on just one cabin over.



The best and worst cinematic sex scenes (Bonus! All the best ones are queer!)

by Jose Nateras and Krutika Surve



TED (2012)

Have you ever wanted to see a giant stuffed teddy bear having sex? Me neither. Seth MacFarlane’s comedic buddy film is a story about John Bennett (Mark Wahlberg), a grown man, and his friendship with his childhood teddy bear, cleverly named Ted. The film does have its fair share of comedic moments, but the part where Ted has sex is *unbearable*. Though it starts off humorous, it gets filthy — especially when certain bodily fluids explode all over Ted’s face. This raunchy comedy raises the question no one ever wanted to ask: What’s the reproductive anatomy of a stuffed bear?

There is a lot of unsexy stuff in the world: the stirring of mac and cheese, undergarments made of wool, Steve Bannon. But when movie love scenes — which are supposed to be sexy — fall short, it can feel intolerable.

There is a wide range of these kinds of bad sex scenes. Some can be awkward and humorous but still uncomfortable. Some can be gross.

And some are just bad.

Krutika Surve (aka America’s Sweetheart, aka the Eighth Wonder of the World) is an Indian American artist from Denver. She is studying Design Communications at SAIC.



SAUSAGE PARTY (2016)

This entire movie is absolutely ridiculous. Riddled with raunchy comedic gags, “Sausage Party” follows a group of foods on a quest to avoid mastication. Wild, I know. Just when you think it’s over and it’s time to put your computer away for the night, there is a three-minute orgy scene with all the food items. (I wish I was kidding.) And because the characters are items of food and not actual people, the creators can make the action more explicit than anyone wants it to be. I haven’t eaten a hot dog since.



FIFTY SHADES OF GREY (2015)

The problem with this movie is that there’s not one bad love scene, but a collection of intolerable sex scenes between the film’s leads, played by Dakota Johnson and Jamie Dornan. It’s not entertaining whatsoever, there’s no passion and zero chemistry, and the emotional manipulation makes a mockery of Dominant/submissive relationships. On top of all that, the writer tried to incorporate a love story into this. Nope, absolutely not. It’s all gross, unethical, and not sexy. “Fifty Shades of Grey,” stop ruining sex for us!



ANTICHRIST (2009)

Sex in this film is — wait for it — ungodly. One of the film’s sex scenes is actually the opener for the movie. We see a married, heterosexual couple (Charlotte Gainsbourg and Willem Dafoe) making love in slow motion while their son falls out of his window. He dies as his parents climax. Later in the film, sex acts are consistently bloody and aggressive. This film is mayhem. I’m still recovering emotionally.



WATCHMEN (2009)

While some of the other films in this list have good reasons why they are bad and cringeworthy, this film has no excuse because the filmmakers *actually tried* to make it sexy. To begin with, they set it to arguably one of the best songs ever written: Leonard Cohen’s classic “Hallelujah.” (And the version used in this film, dry and weird, was not a good choice.) The positions seem weird and unnatural, the facial expressions excessive. The film tries so hard, but this is the worst of the worst.

comics

Jeremy Tinder

You Broke My Fucking Heart



Gabe Howell

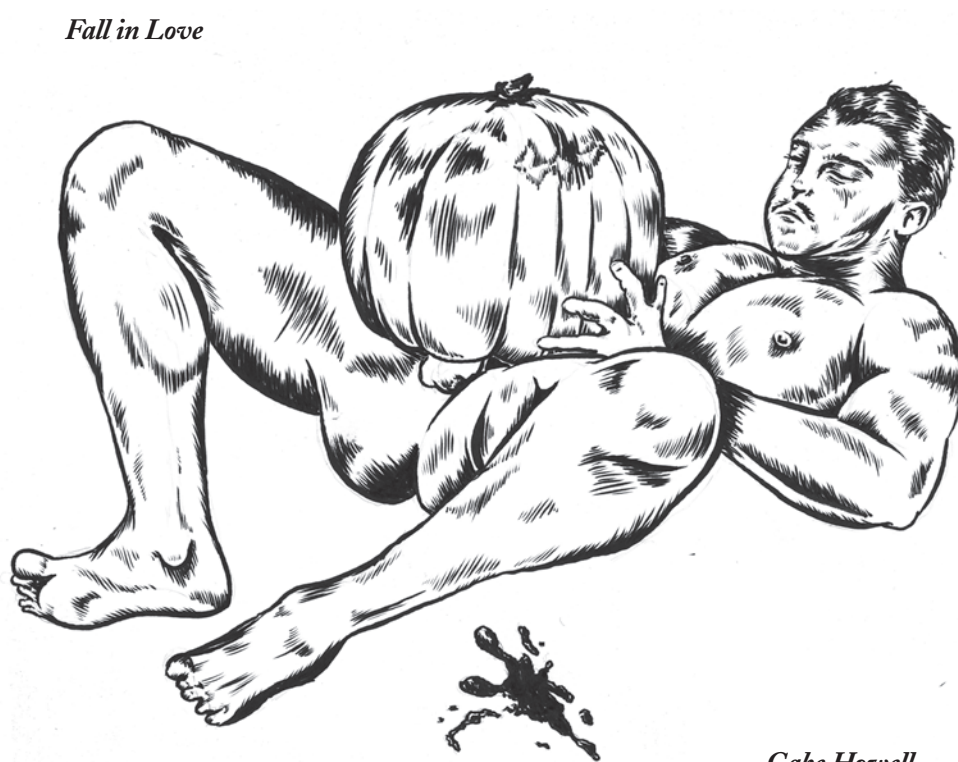




Irene Boyias



Gabe Howell



Gabe Howell



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