



*between
women*

RFSL (The Swedish Federation for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Rights) was founded in 1950, as a reaction against the oppression of people who differ from gender norms and the expectations surrounding who we should share sex, love and our lives with. Through the years, RFSL has gathered extensive experiences and knowledge about RFSL-people's living conditions, situations and sexualities.

RFSL is critical of the controlling and inhibiting norms that restrict sexuality. We demand that no one's sexuality be denied, as long as those who participate do so with consent and equality. Sexuality should be seen as an essential part of a person as a whole, something that permeates our entire lives and plays an important role in society. Sexuality is a source of desire and belonging for every individual. It's an affirmation of our individuality, and it boosts our self-esteem and well-being. Socially, sexuality can build up ways to communicate, and bridge divides.

By becoming a member of RFSL, you don't only support our sexual-political work; you also gain access to the activities that are organized in your local branch. Contact your local branch for more information about what's happening in your area. Everyone who wants to support RFSL is welcome to become a member!

focusing lust

For too long, the Swedish Federation for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Rights, RFSL, has not paid enough attention to women's sexual practices. This is in spite of the fact that part of our work is founded on women's rights to their own sexuality and the experiences of women who have sex with women. We believe that this publication is not only long overdue, but also eagerly awaited.

Writing about women who have sex with women with a focus on sexual desire aren't common, neither in the LGBT community nor in society at large. Women's sexuality is all too often tied to reproduction, and women's experiences of desire are left overlooked. Or else the focus is placed on problems that can occur as a consequence of sex. Or the attention given to women's sexuality is put in relation to the sexuality of men, which is given considerably more space.

Because of this, it is all the more important to present non-problem oriented, curious and positive perspectives on women's sexuality. In *Between Women*, we offer an easily accessible, inspiring text that we hope will generate some talking, both amongst those of you who've long had an active sex life and for those who are perhaps just starting out on one. For some, the only new aspect of this publication might be finally seeing your experiences in print. For others, it might lead to the discovery of something new. We hope and believe that *Between Women* will lead to discussion, the delight of discovery and new desire. Sex is an entirely too large, fun and important part of our lives to be kept in the dark.

Sören Andersson & Ulrika Westerlund
president & vice president of RFSL



When I shut my eyes now, I was hovering over Cara, an inch from her cherry-red clitoris. The hood of her clitoris was not a hood to take off, only to push back. In fact, the whole thing was a series of folds and layers, a Pass the Parcel in which the gift was not inside the wrappings, but was the wrappings. If you touched the glans directly it would be too sharp, like a blow. I was touching it indirectly, through and with the hood, that felt so astonishing. Like an endearment in a mundane sentence, or a cherry on a rockbun, the combination was all. It was not the bald revelation that thrilled me, but the moment of revealing: not the veil or the bare body, but the movement of unveiling

from *Hood*, by Emma Donoghue
HAMISH HAMILTON, LONDON 1995

what is sex?

The desire to have children has nothing to do with sex, and today there are many other clever ways to go about planning that big change in your life. When we look beyond the reproductive aspect of sex, i.e. the possibility or desire to get knocked up, the only thing that remains is the experience of sex itself. That's when sex can become just about anything, something that ignites or satisfies, shakes, entertains, tickles, frustrates, perplexes or turns the world upside-down.

When it comes down to it, it seems desire doesn't reside solely in the pussy, skin, head, hands, or in another's body, nor is it only talk and gestures. If anything, it's somewhere in between, impossible to separate from the daily aspects of life, and perhaps the very thing that makes the everyday more vivid and important. How that finds expression is a whole different story.

It's often said that sex would be so much better if we could cast aside all of our prejudices, all of the worry and taboo that envelops us, that we would then be free to experience our bodies in new ways. But it's important to remember that sex is actually also a way to deal with many of the difficulties that we encounter in life.

Sex isn't supernaturally important, sacred or mystical; it's part and parcel of all of the other aspects of our lives, and just one of the possible expressions that our worry, frustration, happiness and longing can take. If sex doesn't seem so important to you, it might be because you experience life's intensity in some other way. In that case you've got nothing to worry about, aside from maybe being bored to death by some of the more avid, sex-spouting enthusiasts out there. But it can also be because our definitions of what sex is are so narrow and arbitrary, and the »rules« seem so complicated. Who decides? How do we know?

If you're a woman who's turned on by women, you've already broken one basic societal norm: that women should have sex with men. In doing that, you're already well-equipped to see through the rest of the rulebook, and to simply trust your own thoughts and feelings.

Your body isn't a temple; it's a vehicle in the adventure that is your life. That's why we think it's important not to feel needlessly restricted. Sexual "liberation" isn't about how much sex you have or in what ways, but about your awareness of the possibility to choose for yourself. Obviously, this isn't a guidebook to correct sex. Nor is it a call to have more sex or the "right" kind of sex. We simply wish to say something about that thing we occupy ourselves with, but which is so rarely described.

“sex with women”

Calling sex between women “lesbian sex” gets weird when you consider how differently women define themselves and their sexual actions. For some people, it's the whole package of “woman” that's sexy and the basis for the attraction. What “woman” is, and whether one desires that in the same way as a heterosexual man or in a completely different way, becomes pretty uninteresting when you consider that we learn about what's sexy from so many different directions at the same time.

On the other hand, to many it's quite important to find a definition for their completely unique way of being and experiencing the world, as women. And to find something in that that unites them with others. And that's how it's going to be as long as the majority keeps assuming that every person they meet is heterosexual. It's impossible for us to form our sexualities without being affected by the norms and images that we're fed in a hetero-normative society. But there are many women who never have sex with men and don't think very much about how the tabloids

“You're so quiet. I want to hear if you like it.”

Then she leaned forward, somehow got her legs behind my back and came so close that I could feel her breath. She lay her hands around my waist and took my breast between her lips.

It wasn't for real!

At first I felt like a marzipan pig, but as she sucked and bit and let her tongue twist around my nipple, my nerves started to tremble and my breath caught in my throat. As her mouth got more insistent and her hands suddenly moved hard across my backside, I suddenly felt that she had found an instrument, perhaps a zither, deep behind my navel she strummed seductively at the strings as if she were playing, as if she were composing a new song, far away, and as though at any moment I could join in the sound, until we reached a key higher than I had ever sung before and I had to call out in a voice that I'd never heard. Call out her name.

Translated from the novel
Färdas på en blick ('Carried by a Glance')
by Lotta Lundberg

*If male homosexuals are called “gay”,
then female homosexuals should be
called “ecstatic”.*

Shelly Roberts



“ *I'm having the absolute best sex I've ever had with my current girlfriend. I think it's because it's really reciprocal. And it's no big pressure, we can have sex just because it's fun, just for the experience. Like when I said that I was going to do this interview, we sitting on the commuter train and she started to rub my breast: 'Want a story to tell?' Ha ha!*

We met at a demonstration. Afterwards I made out with her on the dance floor at Slick. We soon ended up in her kitchen. I was totally impressed when she lifted me up onto the kitchen counter – I'm not exactly what you'd call light, ha ha. Then we had sex all night long. Afterwards, she said that she'd never been so properly fucked the first time by anyone. And I was like the happiest person in the world! My whole body ached for a few days afterwards, but it was totally worth it!*

Monica Amante, administrator

*A queer club in Stockholm

say they're supposed to behave in bed. Others feel that the most exciting thing about having sex with other women is that it goes against expectations, that it is something unique and freer and therefore feels more “real”. Some find female bodies sexually desirable although they consider themselves pretty much heterosexual, or simply feel more attracted to women at times and at others to men, for the same or completely different reasons.

When we speak about “women” in the context of this text, we're working under the same assumptions that society uses to define the female body. We also consider the attitudes encountered by people who have been raised as women, and – above all – their own identifications as women. Gender is constructed through the images we create in our minds of the bodies around us, and that in turn decides what does or doesn't turn us on.

As women, our sexual practices are colored by the fact that we're assigned positions in society based on our relation to men. Many women who also have sex with men feel that sex with women gives them the opportunity to experiment in a different way, because the roles aren't always as predetermined as with “hetero-sex”. Experiencing your right to decide for your body and your desire can also lead you to feel more confident in your sexual interaction with men, and enable you to maintain a sense of reciprocity, regardless of your “role” within the sexual encounter. For others, the practical differences between having sex with women and with men are very important, because they simply create outlets for different types of feelings.

In the LGBT community, lesbian and gay worlds are often placed in opposition to each other, and the lives of gay men are presented as more “sexually liberated”. To understand how that has happened, we need to look at the difference between the difficulties and oppression that gays and lesbians have experienced respectively throughout hetero-normative

history. Gay men's sexual culture, where sexual practice plays a central role, has partly developed as a reaction to the fact that sex between men is one of the most oppressive taboos in society. Sexual relations between women have gone more unnoticed throughout history, because people couldn't imagine the existence of any kind of sexual urges that didn't involve cocks. As a result, it hasn't been as necessary to make sex into the primary issue in our struggle to exist with equal rights, while questions concerning women's rights, across the borders of sexuality, have been considerably more urgent and prominent in the wider culture.

Fucking may not have defined our political agenda, but that hardly makes it any less common or interesting. Silence has done more than just make us invisible; it's also left a lot of space for us to invent our own image of what sex is – and what it could be. Congratulations!

bump & grind

The most “common” form of sex – bodies rubbing against each other and against various body parts – has infinite variations. Once upon a time –when an action only counted as sex if it ended in a man's ejaculation – everything that concerned stimulation just for the sake of pure stimulation was considered “foreplay”. In lesbian environments of the past, this form was sometimes called tribadism.

“Pussy grinding” can be when your pussy meets hers when you straddle her, when you pull her thigh up between your legs and ride it, your sex against her butt when she's down on all fours, you name it. You can do it in a thousand different ways: standing, sitting, lying down, from behind, from in front, with eye-contact or without, with one person more active, or both at the same time. Hard and slow, fast and soft. The body has endless possibilities and the pussy is just one of its acknowledged pleasure-



“ I was 21, in Spain. She was hot, and completely hammered by the time we left the party, but it'd been obvious that we were going to have sex the whole night. I didn't have any clear idea of how it was going to go down, but she was more experienced. But right when we got started, she got so passive that I just took command. I penetrated her with my fingers – before that I was nervous that it would be disgusting to lick a girl, but it wasn't. We kept at it for a fucking long time. Or at least I did: I was too focused to even notice that she wasn't touching me. Today, I wouldn't exactly call that good sex, but I can say that it was fantastic at the time.

I'd seen myself as being really active with men, but when I started having more sex with girls I got hung up on the idea that you should “ask for permission” and “do it right,” and I became more passive. After a bit more free experimenting in my first longer relationship, I got over that.

Anna Fock, office worker

1. *Don't try to lick the way they do in "lesbian" porn films: they do it like that because they're not lesbians, and so the camera can see both their tongues and their genitals. It's totally unnecessary to stick your tongue out and lick it like an ice-cream cone, and it's actually pretty hard to move and flex your tongue when it's sticking all the way out of your mouth.*

2. *Start with the surrounding area, check out what happens when you lick the labia and other places that aren't totally central. The clit isn't going anywhere.*

3. *When it's time for the finale: pinpoint the clitoris by pressing your lips around it. That way it ends up close to your tongue, and you don't have to stick your tongue out and get cramps. You have total control and can lick as fast as you want when the moment starts to approach. That's the difference between a reasonably good pussy-eater and a fantastic one.*

4. *Most people like it if you slip in a finger or two while you're licking.*

5. *(This point was taken out after a controversy about whether or not you should suck on the clitoris, there are many detailed descriptions available on this point.)*

6. *Tease.*

Tips on "Going Down", by Swedish blogger Sara Lövestam

zones. It's often the combination that does the trick, the new discoveries of how your body responds to simultaneous sensations. The right touch can also transform you into that one sensing bodypart, or make you experience your body in a whole new way. The best way to find new buttons to push is by experimenting and following your body's impulses.

When you have enough "juice," a touch can feel more intense. Vaginal secretion is the body's own lubricant. It can be sexy visually, to feel against your skin, to taste. Sexy because you can feel that she's hot and wet, or because it seems as if her body is showing a life of its own. If and how wet you get varies, and it isn't a "proof" of how horny you are. If you want more juice, lubricant is a wonderful helper; choosing one with a fragrance or flavour can also add a new dimension to the sex.

licking

You can get a very intense feeling from letting someone so close to you. Or coming so close to someone else's most sensitive and intimate parts, something secret and seemingly "forbidden". Our pussies and our mouths are such charged organs that they open us up to a lot of strong feelings. With oral sex, the interplay between reciprocity, giving yourself over and being in control, becomes particularly suggestive.

Some people love oral sex while others don't enjoy it at all, but it often depends on who you're having it with, in what way and under what circumstances. That all women who have sex with women like giving or receiving oral sex is just as much of a myth as saying that all gay men engage in anal sex and all heteros in traditional intercourse. It's pure lack of imagination that leads people to assume that all women who like women are completely fixated on sex organs. But there can be something special about giving oral sex to a woman, to project your own

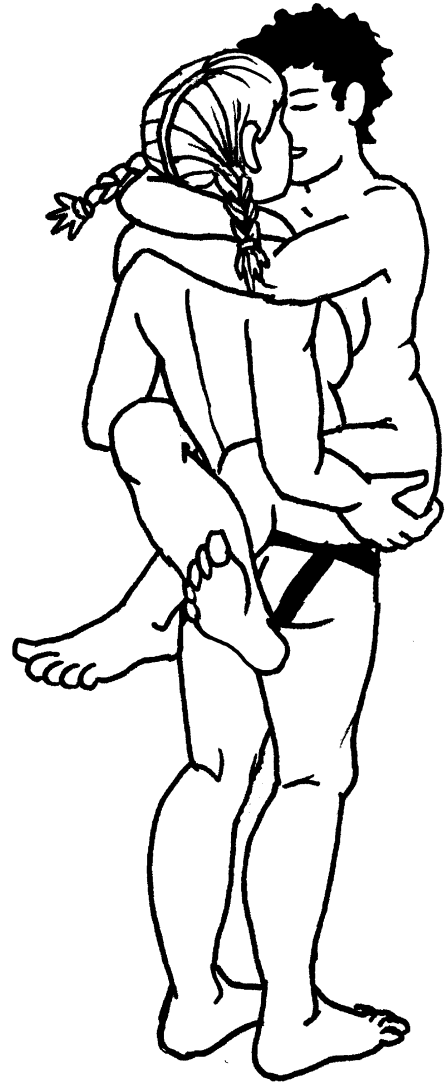
pleasure onto her and feel the pussy as something sexy and powerful, something yet not explored or depicted in the mainstream. And maybe for this reason all the more exciting.

Some like the tongue to be pointed, in order to press harder against certain points, or a soft tongue against the whole pussy. The clitoris may be too sensitive for direct pressure, or else it may be the extreme intensity of being licked right there that makes it so exhilarating. Some people want to be licked faster and faster, others with a regular tempo or pressure until they reach orgasm. For many, it's about what state their bodies are in while they're getting licked, and maybe more about the actual circumstance of being eaten out than the physical stimulation. There's no shortage of tricks for good technique, but a big factor is that you enjoy doing it, because the person who's being eaten out can tell. That's why the smartest thing to do is to only go as far as you feel comfortable with. Try holding your tongue almost completely still and let her move against it, to feel how hard, where and in what tempo she wants it. For almost everyone, the most gratifying technique is being licked by someone who really enjoys it.

clitoris

Despite the fact that it's so delicate, the clitoris is a very powerful thing: the round button that you see is just the tip of a 10 centimeter-long organ composed of erectile tissue that swells and becomes erect during arousal.

The clitoris can also ejaculate a fluid produced by the Skene's glands (or female prostate) through the urethra. This is most often achieved by stimulating the G-spot, between 2–10cm inside the vagina. And you know, of course, that the hymen is a myth?





“ I texted her an order to her mobile: unlock the door and wait in the bedroom. I wore my strap-on the whole way there. She was lying naked on her stomach, turned away from me, but I knew that she could bear me. I slipped on a condom and some lube. Then I took her from behind, slow at first, then faster and faster. I came just from that, that the whole situation was so loaded. Not the fucking in itself. The technical stuff is less important. The silence and the role-play and the other person not knowing what's going to happen. That she's totally lost in my story. The feeling of expectation, that's almost what it's all about.

In role-play, I'm someone who could change roles, absolutely, I'm a switch. I think that a lot of butches are, for that matter, but most of them don't want to admit it, ha ha. But why should you have to like everything?

Ann Jansson, Federal Butch, handyman and chauffeur

in-and-out

Penetration is a disproportionately loaded topic. Our entire society is filled with representations of intercourse, the act that's supposed to symbolize the battle between “masculine” and “feminine”. Within the act of penetration, we usually encounter two roles: one who ‘does’ and one who gets ‘done’, one active and one passive. As soon as we get past these loaded associations, we can see it for what it really is; lying on top of someone or sticking one body part into another can take on endless possible meanings. It depends completely on who is fucking, and how. For other people, penetration is no more linked to the male cock than wearing pants: it's just a nice way to have sex.

The inner walls of our vaginas all respond differently to touch. You might like the feeling of enveloping something big, that something is filling you up and moving inside you – several fingers or a larger dildo. Or maybe just a little tickle, either the whole time or just at first, to get you more aroused. Others get turned on and get the most out of being taken hard and/or without much lead-up. You can also experience different kinds of pleasure from different spots inside of you. Upwards toward the g-spot, for example, or downwards, back toward the rectum, or deeper inwards. It can also be great to feel the vaginal muscles at the very opening tightening around something: penetration that stays near the entrance.

Fingers are good for penetration because they're flexible and sensitive, can bend in different directions and give us total control over how hard or fast we move. The tightening of the vaginal muscles can tell us how to do it best. The very feeling of being inside someone and feeling her arousal, or having someone inside you can sometimes be the most arousing of all. Of course, sex toys also have their charm; there's no shortage of stuff to try out if you're curious.

accessories

Some of us start using dildos and other toys to bring some variety into the sex in a long-term relationship, but there's nothing strange about dropping the suggestion when you're having casual sex, the first time you're with someone. It might need some practice, not just to understand how they need to be used differently with different people, but also to find out what you yourself like best.

Dildos can serve a load of different functions. Some people like experiencing the sensation of a foreign object, others think of it as an extension of their own or their partner's body. It can evoke a certain feeling of release, playfulness, absurdity, or a rejection of everything "natural" that's connected to sex which sometimes feel tedious and confining. Dildos come in a load of different sizes, shapes and materials. Some have details designed to stimulate the clitoris during penetration, vaginally or anally. Double dildos are useful when you both want to be penetrated at the same time. Strap-on dildos are fastened around your waist and rest against your crotch, which allows you both to keep your hands free and to get stimulation from wearing it. Strap-on harnesses are adjustable, so you can change between various dildo types and sizes. Others prefer to use a thigh harness-- with the dildo fastened to your thigh it can be easier to try out different positions and find more ways to come at each other's bodies.

The toy selection in sex shops is often aggravatingly based around what heterosexual women are assumed to want, with standard models of penis-shaped dildos, or ridiculous dolphins (if you don't happen to have a dolphin fetish) instead of toys designed for different body types and techniques. However, on the Internet you can find specialist shops that carry all varieties. In most large cities you can find boutiques that

"Are you really a lesbian", gasped Marianne.

"What's that?" I whispered.

"This."

She straddled me and swayed her womb against mine.

...

"I want us to be secret. Secret and lesbian", she moaned.

"And if you get tired of it?"

I wriggled under her. Mixed the slippery, salty abundance that flowed out of both of us. Back and forth. Overflowing. By hand, by tongue.

"When we get tired of this," giggled Marianne, "we can always get a dildo."

Translated from the novel *Färdas på en blick* ['Carried on a glance'] by Lotta Lundberg,

BONNIERS 2001



specialize in materials for women who have sex with women. The advantage of visiting them personally is that you get the chance to compare materials, models and sizes, which can make a lot of difference.

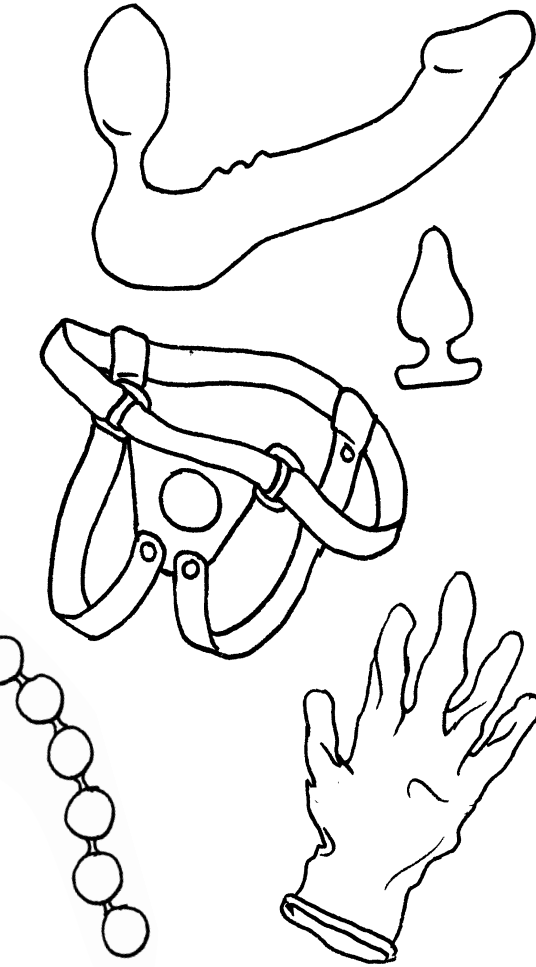
anal play

Penetrating, playing with or licking the anus and the area around it are important ingredients in many people's sex games. You can evoke strong sensations by teasing your finger around the anus and pressing gently against it. Others like penetration, the loosening of the sphincter muscles and the feeling of being filled, with fingers or toys. Even if the concept of anal sex seems a bit strange for some, the actual practice is so common that can't really be connected to either hetero- or homo-sex. You might like being stimulated around your anus without being penetrated, the same way you might like having your clitoris stimulated without getting nailed. It's all about how your body and your fantasies work, and how relaxed you are.

Anal plugs are specially designed for anal play, and are often smaller than dildos because the anus is so sensitive that it requires significantly less stimulation. You might sometimes be wet enough to slide right in, but for deeper penetration it's important to use a lot of saliva and/or lubricant, because the anus is not self-lubricating.

play safe

For anyone involved in the LGBT community, it's hard to miss all of the safer-sex messages directed at guys. Men who have sex with men is the group that's been struck hardest by HIV, but there are extremely few documented cases of biologically-defined women transmitting HIV to



each other. HIV is spread when infected bodily fluids – primarily blood and sperm – enter a person’s mucous membranes. In that respect, it’s very difficult to transmit in comparison to many other sexually-transmitted diseases. Pussy-eating is usually a low-risk activity, since the concentration of HIV in vaginal secretion is low and saliva contains components that inhibit the virus. Anal-licking isn’t particularly risky either. Of course, other sexually transmitted diseases are another story. One way of protecting against herpes, gonorrhea and chlamydia is using a dental dam, which works in the same way as a cut-open condom and is placed over the vagina. If you’re having casual sex or sex with someone who hasn’t been tested, the most important thing is to avoid getting blood in your mouth (e.g. during menstruation) and to change condoms on the dildos and other sex toys that you use together. It’s also good to use lubricant during penetration; the vaginal walls can get scratched more easily if you’re not wet, and without lubrication the anal tissue is extremely sensitive. It’s hard to stay on top of all the symptoms and exactly how you’re supposed to protect yourself; sexually transmitted diseases can go unnoticed, but are still just as harmful and contagious. It’s best to visit a gynecologist once a year to get tested, and seek treatment if it turns out that you have an STD.

tricks & techniques

Some of us find a favourite position and stick to that. Maybe because that’s where you and another person fit perfectly together, because it has the hottest associations and makes you feel your absolute sexiest, or because that’s the best way for you to have an orgasm and the position you use when you masturbate.





“*Going out and having one-night stands right off the bat can be a little tricky when you have a visible physical disability like I do, but believe me, it does happen, ha ha. For me, there’s no obvious, routine way to have sex. Finding positions that work gets central importance, so to speak. But I’m really into finding out how my body can do new things for me, that’s totally made me more experimental when it comes to sex. My Permobil (powered wheelchair) is a part of me and in that way it’s kind of charged, just like a body part.*

For me, the biggest thing is searching for the things that get another person to react. It’s most intense when you take risks, test things without just playing safe by using a lot of exaggerated dirty talk, feel your way in... I think that sex teaches how to feel; you can often understand a lot more through her reactions than what you can by just talking.

Sahar Mosleh, chairperson in the Association for Physically Disabled Youth

It’s important that your body feels aroused or relaxed in the right way, at just the right time. A position can be significant because it allows your body to get just as tensed or relaxed as you need to be in the right moment, gives you more or less access to each other’s bodies, or sets off your fantasies. Getting really close to someone can be intense, and let you feel completely enveloped – too much elbow-room can be distracting. Or it can be tantalizing to let yourself feel vulnerable and exposed, or to be in control of someone else’s body and their pleasure.

We have to be careful when it comes to “technique”. Those of us who have run across a “tongue pro” or an “expert handyman” know the problem; there are few things that can kill the rush more than when someone decides exactly how things are going to be instead of feeling the way. Something that works on one occasion can feel wrong the next time, or with a different person. On the one hand, sex is about how our bodies get stimulated, and on the other it’s about the atmosphere, about flowing between emotional planes. The body isn’t simply one constant, single thing, but rather a surface that’s receptive to completely different sensations in different situations. Variety isn’t always about changing technique or position, but also atmosphere, location and situation. With a new dynamic, sex can become a totally new thing and take on a different meaning.

sound check

Making a lot of noise or breathing hard can be sexy for the person you’re having sex with, or a way of showing your arousal. In a heterosexual context we hear a lot of talk about “faking it”, when a girl tries to sound like she’s having an orgasm though she actually isn’t. In fact, “sound effects” are often a significant turn-on factor during sex, a way of escaping our inhibitions or guiding our partner, just as “fake” and just as much an

expression of our personalities as when we laugh at something that's funny, though not the funniest thing we've ever heard in our lives. Clearly there are times when we feel so much pleasure that we can't keep quiet, but that hardly means that we only make noise because we're pleased.

It's the same with talking; some people find that it excites them to talk and say dirty things during sex, or get turned on by hearing about what the person they're having sex with is doing, or what they want. It can be a way of creating a zone that's further away from everyday life, releasing inhibitions and becoming a more "sexual" person. For many others, a bunch of talk is just an interruption. It can make it hard to concentrate, and it's not so fun to listen to someone who's saying all the "wrong" things. But it's also exciting to get to experience the way another person acts when she's aroused, something new that gives you the opportunity to set things moving in a new directions.

Don't buy the myth that "a woman knows what a woman wants" – women work just as differently from each other as women and men do. If you're aware of how your own body works (masturbation is recommended), you have something to go on, and the rest is about staying receptive. Having a discussion about what you want while you're having sex can be difficult and also turn you off, but there are many other ways that you can be communicative. Daring to show what you're turned on by, taking initiative and being receptive to hints and signals also encourage our sex partners to be more communicative. Using stories about our wishes and fantasies to build up the atmosphere and add fuel to our sex is a clever way to take things in a new direction that you can both get more out of.



“ I’ve gotten a lot of pleasure from strap-on sex for over 25 years. It’s not just about “wanting cock” in you or on you, but also about flexibility and feeling each other, skin-to-skin. Though to tell you the truth, I still find it’s a pain in the ass to get the damn thing on: by the time I’m done, my partner might as well have fallen asleep or died laughing, and the moment is gone, though maybe not for good... It would have been worse if I’d been a bio-man at those times... I’d never have been able to keep it up!

That’s why one time I came up with the brilliant idea of showing up “pre-cocked,” and that time it turned out that she wanted to do something totally different. So then I just prided off the whole package and let my hands and fingers do the job!

Del LaGrace Volcano, hermaphrodyke, photographer and gender-bending artist

*Here she was wet, and smooth as velvet.
I had never, of course, touched anyone like this
before – except, sometimes myself; but it was as
if I touched myself now, for the slippery hand
which stroked her seemed to stroke me: I felt
my drawers grow damp and warm, my own
hips jerk as hers did. Soon I ceased my gentle
stroking and began to rub her, rather hard.
“Oh!” she said very softly; then, as I rubbed
faster, she said “Oh!” again. Then, “Oh, oh, oh!”:
a volley of “Oh!’s, low and fast and breathy.
She bucked, and the bed gave an answering
creak; her own hands began to chafe distractedly
at the flesh of my shoulders. There seemed no
motion, no rhythm, in all the world, but that
which I had set up, between her legs, with one
wet fingertip.*

From the novel *Tipping the Velvet*,
by Sarah Waters, VIRAGO PRESS 1998

orgasms

Some people have orgasms easily, like a high point or the logical climax of sex. It can be something that builds up gradually in the body or it can come quite suddenly, by combining the right fantasy and the right “technique”. For some people an orgasm is the climax of a sex act, which means that they don’t have any drive left afterwards; for others it’s one, or perhaps many points of intensity that are experienced during sex. In most cases, orgasms are reached through a combination of fantasies, movement and touch. Many people need a lot of stimulation in a particular way in order to come. Clitoral stimulation is one way, but many people achieve it more easily through vaginal or anal stimulation, from the breasts or the pubic mound, or perhaps without any direct touch at all.

However, for many others the orgasm is something nearly mythical. Maybe you’ve had one, but it wasn’t the earth-shattering experience that supposedly makes up for all of life’s emptiness. Others are frustrated that they don’t feel more. If you’ve never had an orgasm, it can be a bit difficult to imagine how you could go about having one. Testing it out, by holding a vibrator against the places where you’re most sensitive (e.g. over your clitoris, inside your vagina or against your anus) can be a smart way of finding out which parts of you react most strongly. But for most of us it’s less about finding the “right technique” and more about finding the doorway in your mind that gives way to the feeling. Losing yourself in the situation and unleashing the right fantasies can be much more important than what the person you’re having sex with actually “does”.

Reaching orgasm at the same time can be something special. Still, we’re never actually sharing the same feeling; regardless of the timing, everyone’s orgasm is a different experience. Many people just want to collapse after an orgasm and prefer not to receive more stimulation themselves, though

that doesn't exclude the possibility to stimulate someone else of course. Others prefer to concentrate on one person's pleasure at a time; experiencing someone else's orgasm can be a strong trigger for your own arousal, or be more pleasurable than coming yourself. You can also learn to control your orgasms, how to delay them and make them stronger, for example through masturbating.

Pleasure and orgasm are often two very separate things. You might only reach orgasm in one way, but you can still experience other kinds of arousal through variety and the discovery of something new through sex. Sex is the building up of desire and a game played with tensions and energies, it's the thing that you do with your arousal, not some kind of climax or final result.

do it yourself

Some do it all the time, some do it now and again when they get the urge, others never do it at all. Naturally, having sex with yourself can mean totally different things to different people. Sometimes it's about feeling totally hot for yourself, a way to strengthen your appreciation for your body as amazing and desirable. At other times, it's a mechanical act. We do it to get rid of some of the tension in our bodies, use it as an outlet when we're just generally feeling horny, or to live out a certain desire (it's not necessarily more satisfying to fuck someone in "reality" than to do it in the realm of our much more meticulous





“ It took me 25 years for me to become the dyke that I’ve actually always been. Rediscovering my body sexually after the sex change operation was a strange process. My body was completely right, but unfamiliar. I’d been cut apart and had my nerves relocated, the only thing to do was start over from the beginning. Through learning to masturbate again, I was able to come into myself. The strangest was the orgasm! If you’ve lived in “another body,” you don’t really know what you’re looking for, but this is something that many biologically-born women also have trouble with. After eight months and a lot of playing with both vibrators and dildos, I finally had my first orgasm.

At the same time, there are other aspects of sex that are considerably more important for me today. I have a different relationship to my body, I think that different bodies give different perspectives. The mind can draw up a whole new map.

Erica Zander, civil engineer and trans activist

fantasy), or as a way to escape boredom or even comfort ourselves. For some people it’s a totally different, and much more obvious deal than having sex with other people, while for others it’s more like a substitute.

Masturbation technique is simply about going with the flow. There’s no guarantee that just rubbing your clit is going to do the trick, though it works quite well for many of us. Try tensing and relaxing different parts of your body. Experimenting with positions that break your routines or make you feel differently can make it easier to awaken new feelings, or increase sensation. You can try locking your legs – sit on the edge of your bed, spread your legs and raise them above you. Hold them in the air and arch the small of your back, or place a pillow under it. Using the right objects – pillows, for example – to create different forms of weight or resistance can make it easier to get into the positions that trigger your fantasies.

Masturbation can also be a way to build up your sexual prowess with other people. Knowing what you like is a good starting point for teaching someone else what satisfies you, which makes everyone happy. At the same time, things that seem wonderful when you do them by yourself can feel inadequate when you’re with someone else. The sex that you have with yourself is different, because it doesn’t depend upon your attraction to a specific person. You never know if someone else will be able to do it to you as well as you can do it to yourself.

“good” & “bad” sex

Taboo is one of the most effective ingredients in creating sexual arousal. In fact, all that drivel about sex being “natural” can be just as inhibiting and stifling as any moralistic denunciations about what’s considered ugly, wrong and forbidden. The idea of “good sex” as proof of some kind of “bodily symmetry” or a “sound” relationship is just as oppressive as a

religious decree. Sex is sex. It's an act that we devote ourselves to for completely different reasons, and it can take on every imaginable form. There's no such thing as "ugly" or "beautiful" sex, nor are there any more or less "natural" ways of having sex, despite what many homo-, bi- and heterosexuals often try to assert.

Rules are always constructions, the ways in which we decide how to feel; an acceptance of certain norms allows us to discard others, to feel free. We are never truly free to perceive or experience sex in a "natural" sense, not so much because we're oppressed by norms but because nothing exists outside of our relationship to norms, both old familiar ones and new ones we make to replace them.

That's why sex is so important for many of us, it's a way to express ourselves by shifting our bodies through different positions, a declaration of who we are, to ourselves and the world around us.

Like all forms of inter-personal interaction, sex can also be terrible and even harmful if it goes wrong. That said, we've been force-fed so many preconceptions about what is harmful that we easily end up acting them out. No one has died from losing the sex-drive in the middle of the act, and moments of disappointment are simply part of the game. If sex is meant to be something that lifts you beyond everyday drudgery, then it's important to accept that sex is also bound to carry certain risks, that it will sometimes bring you into contact with energies that don't agree with your own. It's also crucial that you're able to set and respect certain boundaries with yourself about how far you're prepared to go. In every sexual encounter, be conscious of what you want the sex to provide for you, and be sure that you have the power to speak out when it doesn't give you what you need.

*I lay on my back and waited, sometimes
Martha would take care of me afterwards.
She was still panting. For the first time, I got
an impulse and did exactly what my body
wanted me to do, without any consideration to
hers. I crawled up over her sweat-covered torso
and pushed my sex against hers, so hard that
my clitoris pressed against her swollen lips,
pressed so tightly that there was no longer
anything to create resistance between us. The
bed creaked and cried so that the whole piazza
outside could have reverberated with the sound,
but I didn't care about that. I pressed my mouth
against hers until the tremendous started to
take place down inside me, in my darkness.
With my arms around her back and my hands
clinging to her shoulders, I felt my head being
pulled backward and upward, my whole body
was tensed while that tremendous spasm pulled
and pulled until release came crashing over me,
flooding over my quivering, red brim.*

*I sank back into myself and rolled off her
heavily, landed with my nose against her shaved
armpit which smelled of Mum for Men. I didn't
dare look at her. I had stolen her role in our
relationship, or at least borrowed it, and it was
so incredible that I never wanted to give it up.
That was how it was going to be.*

Translated from the novel *Kärlek i Europa*
['Love in Europe'] by Birgitta Stenberg,
NORSTEDTS 1981



“ *The first time I got seduced by a butch, I couldn't speak for two days afterwards. While she admired my red fingernails, her hand slid over my thigh, up under my skirt. I had no control, and it was a completely new feeling for me. As if no one had ever touched me before.*

It's still hard to describe what the erotic butch-femme game does to me. But ten years later, I know that my desire is hopelessly predictable: as a rule, I generally only get turned on by the kind of masculinity that butches, bois and FTMs possess. They understand and affirm who I am. They get me, sometimes force me to be in my body, and like it. I can see the satisfaction they get from taking the lead, and that gives me the power to receive, to envelop. The butch cock is the only cock I want, and I know exactly how to make it hard. Sometimes a look is all it takes.

Ulrika Dahl, teacher, wordsmith & bad girl

power-play

Every day, we're inhibited by the rules of custom and conduct, and the realm of sex is no exception. Perhaps we avoid taking initiative or really going for it, for example, because that behavior goes against traditional notions about how women should act. Or we try to adapt to the expectation that we should be more “active” in order to avoid emanating some kind of “classic femininity”. On top of that, we meet the expectation that women have a strong need for “reciprocity” and caution, as if the passionate power-play within a sexual encounter is always dependent on some kind of “masculine-feminine” dichotomy.

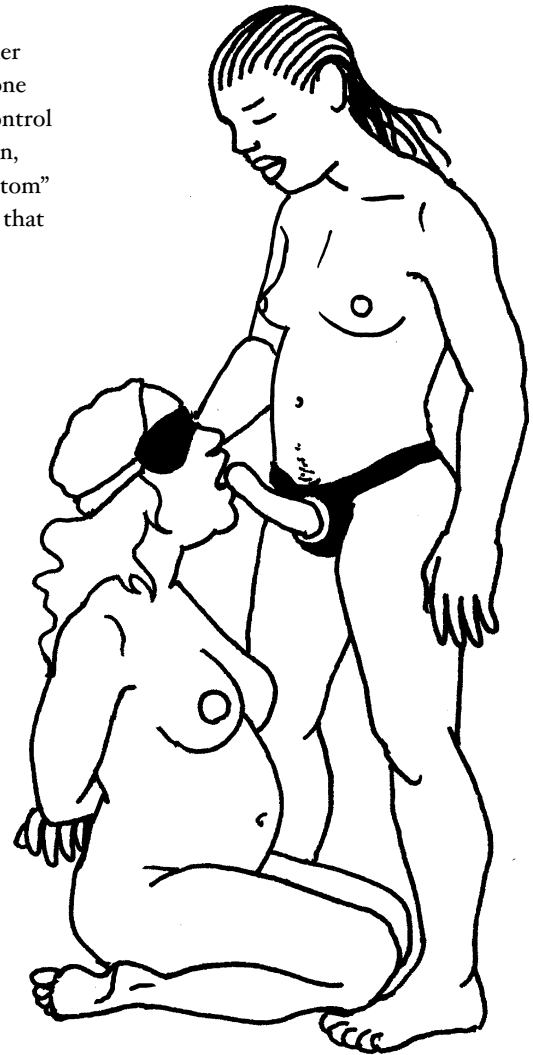
Simply having a body that's traditionally sorted into the “female” category does not carry any specific needs or wishes along with it. There are no “sex rules” for women, nor are there any real masculine or feminine sexual behaviors: just conditioned ideas and patterns. That's exactly why it can be so liberating to play with roles. During sex we have permission to transform ourselves, and the things we experience can take on completely new meanings. Just because you're turned on by a certain “type” doesn't mean that you want to have sex in one specific way. There's nothing wrong with wanting to take the driver's seat during sex, or preferring to give oral sex or to penetrate rather than receive, or vice versa. Sex isn't some kind of ‘fairness’ competition; “mutual” sex is about meeting over our separate needs. Sometimes this means that you won't function sexually with a certain person, or it can lead to you making a compromise or opening yourself up to new possibilities.

“Power-play” contains just as many levels of respect and consideration as other kinds of “mutual” sex. The feeling of “melting into” someone is one thing, but it can be just as important to feel the differences in order to get the sensation of being totally fulfilled. Having control over someone

else's pleasure, or being the implement that creates pleasure in another body can be tremendously validating. Or being blown away by someone who shows you how intensely she wants you, being allowed to lose control and just let it happen, or spur it on from a supposed "passive" position, when in actuality you are totally in control. Expressions like "top/bottom" or "active/passive" just tell us that you're in on this kind of game, not that you have more or less right to make demands or experience pleasure.

harder strokes

Many people experience their bodies more intensely, or gain enough distance to reach new way of feeling pleasure by playing more or less advanced role-play games. BDSM, which stands for Bondage, Dominance, Sadism and Masochism, is a way to describe sex that goes beyond the boundaries of "vanilla sex" (though one may wonder what kind of sex qualifies as absolutely "kink-free"). The fact is that sex is often enhanced or even driven by fantasies that may feel both daring and threatening. Tying someone up can give you a sensation of power and control. Playing games in which you're forced or dominated can give you a chance to feel rebellious, or defenseless in someone else's grip. You can also shut out your senses, by using a blindfold, for instance, so that your lover's touch becomes intensified, or unexpected. Just as one person can get turned on by an seeping seduction or a slow caress, someone else may like it sudden and rough: the stinging crack of a hand against your skin, reaching to give you pleasure, a hard sucking at your nipple that approaches the unbearable. It can pivot around unspoken shifts in who has the control, be expressed through





“*Holding someone down, or tying the wrists to the bedposts is very exciting to me. Leather handcuffs are the sexiest, because their smell, texture, and strength, combined with a blindfold are unbeatable. I like to be the one who has control and decide what’s going to happen, the power to get someone into a state where she can’t choose, and has to let go. I also know how liberating it can be to not have to provide something in return at the same time, and just be able to let go. Not knowing what’s going to happen. If you just follow whatever reactions come up, you’ll always get a new experience. I think it can get monotonous if you don’t try to experiment and break roll patterns in your sex life and your relationship. The unpredictable is important for building up sexual tension.*”

Helene Delilah, manager of LASH, a fetish club for women in Stockholm, and sex educator

spoken demands and silent glances, alternate between threat and gratification, and it can be a confusing mix of pleasure and pain.

These games are about leaving the everyday behind, entering a space where you have totally different requirements for how you want to be treated, and how you will treat others. That’s why you may get a kick out of crossing your boundaries and living out your fantasies. It can also be a strong experience of intimacy and reciprocity. Control is about respect: the capacity and trust to let another person see you at your most exposed. It goes without saying that the prerequisites for living out a new experience with your body are a feeling of security in the situation, boundaries, and control. That goes just as well for playing in a BDSM club or playing the “regular” sex games at home with your partner.

chick porn

Just as BDSM is not an expression of a desire to harm people “for real”, but rather a way to bring out another image of yourself and the world that turns you on, porn is not an expression of how you want or believe that sex should be in “reality”. You might think that sexuality should be “clean” of the expressions conveyed through pornographic images, but it now serves a function beyond being just a norm for inter-personal relationships. To cross, or to simulate crossing your own boundaries can be an important way to live out your fears and the fantasies that you wouldn’t want to carry out in reality.

It’s a myth that you won’t be able to get turned on by hetero-porn just because you’re not turned on by men. Porn has its own life and symbolic value for people regardless of their sexual orientation, and on top of that it can be titillating just to watch people fucking. Like seeing something that you feel is shameful or forbidden, or encountering something that you’re

not cool with. Even if many people think porn is stereotypical and boring, it's those very clichés that some people find extra exciting. A lot of girls, both heterosexuals and others, prefer gay porn. It can be tantalizing exactly because you get distance from your own sex, or because it allows you to have a freer experience where you don't have associations with women's exploitation and subjugation, which are the most common expressions in hetero-porn.

Many people want to see porn that's made based on what women who are turned on by women like. Not least because images of women having sex with women for purposes other than turning heterosexual men on are still so rare in our society. Many people think that it's stupid to adjust women's sexuality to an industry which has been primarily created for the needs of men. But at the same time, women also live, participate in and are informed by the construction of this sexual culture and often get the same satisfaction from porn, even if many prefer their own versions. Currently there are many companies that specifically concentrate on creating "porn" based on the demands of lesbians and bisexual women and on the Internet there are plenty of alternative presentations of sex, arousal and bodies.

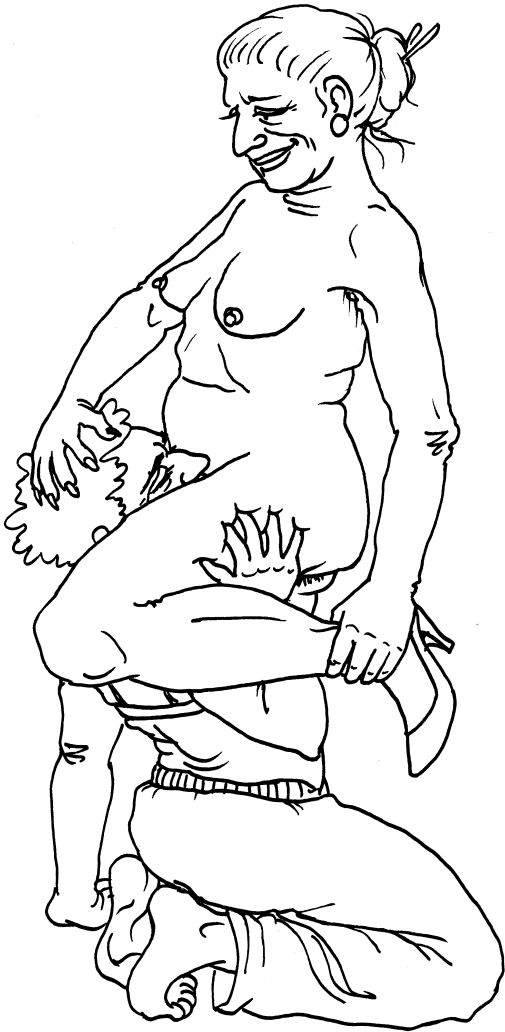
one-night stands

Sometimes we want to have sex just for the sake of sex, or to experience something in the moment which becomes stronger because it will never return. Getting high off a sudden fusion with someone completely unknown to us, or getting satisfaction and abandoning our hangups and just being who we are for one time only. The thing that you only taste once can be the most memorable, completely free of associations other than the suggestive and momentary. Because sex has such different meanings

Her close-clipped cunt hair scraped my face, her pubic bone crashed against my nose as she jerked back and forth as if to show that I was hers now, her private fucking-face, her licking-doll, who wanted and got to eat pussy like the last and most ravenous supper... Her clitoris moved like a soft-hard sea plant under my tongue and I lapped at her pussy like a frantic cat. When she came, she pulled my hair so hard that I couldn't keep from screaming like murder. She, on the other hand, was completely silent, and I couldn't figure out if she'd had an orgasm or just enjoyed torturing me a bit.

"All done," she said as she let go of my head and got up, and I took that as a sign that she had come after all

Translated from the short story
"Kronobergshäktet" ["Kronoberg Jail"]
by Anki Määttä, in *Närstrid: Vanessa*
["Close Combat: Vanessa"] VERTIGO 2005



for people and “rules” come at us from so many different angles at the same time, it’s impossible to really meet in the the same experience, and that can be tantalizing.

Some people get lovestruck after an orgasm, others need contact and longing on a completely different level in order to feel more than just being hot on someone. Being bred in a culture that expects us to have a need for intimacy and a desire to be cared for shapes the way that women have sex and fall in love, causing us to both adjust to and react against those expectations and demands. Many people believe, for instance, that it’s considered ugly to have one-time sex within the dyke world, or else bad and “un-sisterly” style. But it’s obvious that that’s complete nonsense once you look into women’s actual sexual practices – check out the pick-ups that go on in any dyke club around.

There’s no obvious formula for how you’ll have sex when you go home with a girl in the way that heterosexuals can get away with following standard rules. It’s not often that our goal in performing sex is simply to get away with the least possible inconvenience. If you’re having casual sex, it’s smart to 1) have reasonable expectations, 2) be clear about what it is that you’re expecting if you are insistent about something, and/or 3) let yourself be seduced by the sexual tension in the situation itself, and stay open to whatever might happen. The most important thing is never to believe that you know how things are supposed to go down and try to steer things in that direction, and not to follow someone else’s rules just to please them. Realizing that the challenge and adventure in the unexpected is half the fun of a one-night stand makes it easier to dare to take initiative and try something out without being blocked by performance anxiety.

For those who are, or would like to be a part of a scene that’s made up of non-heterosexual women, there are of course some other things to consider, purely for the sake of etiquette and self-preservation. Within groups and subcultures in smaller communities, including those in the “big city”,

people often tend to keep pretty good track of each other. Avoid drama by taking responsibility for your actions in every situation, and play fair so that you don't blow your chances of bringing home the girl's hot friend next time. The smartest thing is to be clear about your intentions if you're not interested in a sequel.

love + sex?

For many of us, passion is strongest when we're in love. Sex is something of a "getting to know you" experience and always leads to surprises. But growing tired of having sex with the same person, or feeling that desire goes up and down in periods is often unavoidable. Different aspects of a shared life come into focus throughout a longer relationship. Arousal can be connected to a feeling of winning someone, to the novelty of experiencing someone "new". Very often, preconceptions about how people should live together get in the way of having enough space, no matter how big the love is. But our passion fizzles out just as much by the assumption that sex is supposed to have the same importance throughout a relationship, even though both we and our partners have actually changed.

"Lesbian bed death" is what people often call it when the passion ends in a relationship between women. As if there were something specifically lesbian about changing desire. Statistically, we know now that heterosexuals or gay men don't have more sex than lesbians or any other women in couple-relationships. But in any case, it's interesting and important to look more thoughtfully and closely at why this expression exists. One reason is that female sexualities are not valued equally. Women who don't fit into the presumed and dominant images of what society agrees is sexy, for example those older or less feminine, are often assumed, out of lack

Cara is clasping my curves between her legs, wearing my thighs and back like a saddle in this trickling rodeo. She jolts against me and I wonder if my back will break. She grinds my hips into the fined dust of pleasure.

"I can't come this way," I hiss. And then I roar like a woman in labour (into three pillows, so the sound won't carry down into Mr. Wall's room) and I do, I do, I do.

Afterwards, Clara lies flat and heavy, growing into me like a sod of grass.

"Sometimes I fancy others more," she whispers to the back of my ear. "But you take me farther."

I bend my arm and reach behind to find her hip, her fuzz, the folds I have so often frisked for secrets. She leans up on her knees to make room for me. This is what I imagine parachuting to be like: as the white silk of her skin rushes through my fingers, she flaps open and we are saved.

from *Hood*, by Emma Donoghue
HAMISH HAMILTON, LONDON 1995



“ I guess you could say that sex between women takes a bit more engagement. I met two dykes that had been together for 18 years, and they said, “We always come together.” That’s impressive, but it’s also something I’m constantly fixated on, how to keep the sex going in a relationship. Nowadays, I don’t think that all that stuff about a gala sex-life and five days a week is realistic. You or your partner has to be able to masturbate if you don’t feel like going at it without that seeming like a failure. If you have periods where it goes on like that for weeks, just screw it. And just let me say: in the autumn years, you’re not swimming in it – pour out the lube! It’s made my sex-life a lot more fun. The longer you go at it, the more lubed up it gets, and the more lubed up, the more fun it is. Astroglide is fucking great. I’m too much of a dull Swede to go in for flavours and that kind of stuff.

Mian Lodalen, freelance journalist, author and activist

of imagination, to have sexless relationships. But it’s also a recognition of the fact that many women’s relationships outlast the fading of sexual desire. Other values, like strong solidarity or other bonds, become more important.

Some people call themselves “asexual” to point out that they don’t subscribe to the expectations and stereotypical images of what’s supposed to drive a person’s life and their relations to other people. It can feel important to explain to others, not in the least because there are so many situations where we’re expected to behave in certain ways and express certain needs, that this doesn’t mean that we feel an aversion to other people. Just because we learn ways to experience closeness and affirmation doesn’t mean that they’re always going to follow a pattern, or that they can’t be changed, or that the very change in what triggers intensity, excitement and satisfaction throughout our lives can’t be the strongest sensation of all.

Sex can be the strengthening link in a couple relationship when you choose only to do it with each other, that exclusivity can be fantastic. To allow each other to experiment sexually or explore sexual needs outside of the relationship can add new energy and attraction to a couple relationship. But exclusivity is often an important prerequisite that gives us the strength and ability to manage a relationship with our partners and with the other aspects of our lives. Sexual frustration, boredom with the routine or feelings of expectations placed on us are things that no person, regardless of their gender or preference, will be able to escape in their quest for intimacy.

more than one

Loving someone can be synonymous with a feeling of “forever”. That’s because the feeling is as big as life, and puts everything into a new perspective. But many of us experience that feeling more than once, just as strongly, but in totally different ways. Talking about sex and love at the same time can be difficult because we risk putting one ahead of the other, as if it weren’t possible for both to take on every imaginable expression. It’s easy to say that “sex doesn’t mean anything” when we feel the need to live out our lust with people outside of a relationship with someone we love. It’s hard to accept that we have needs and feelings on so many different levels at the same time. Not everyone is able to or wants to live in one single relationship, or with one person. And why should we want to if the excitement of meeting other people is what makes life interesting?

Treading outside of the norms for how we should have sex and relationships by discovering that we’re turned on by women can lead us to also question other preconceptions about how relationships should be structured. If you discover that your feelings for women are separate from your desire or feelings for men, you may find yourself unable to “choose”. You may be in love with a man, but still feel a strong longing to have sex with women, or vice versa. It can be a way of dealing with the feeling that you’re not completely “whole”, or trapped in the identity package that can come along with being in a “lesbian” or “heterosexual” relationship.

For many people, having an open relationship is a way to feel freer and to keep the spark in the sexual tension with their partners. If sex isn’t the thing that defines intimacy within a unique relationship, then acting on your lust for other people doesn’t have to pose any threat. This can be hard to cope with, as much because of our preconditioned notions about what “fidelity” is, as because of the clash between our need for both



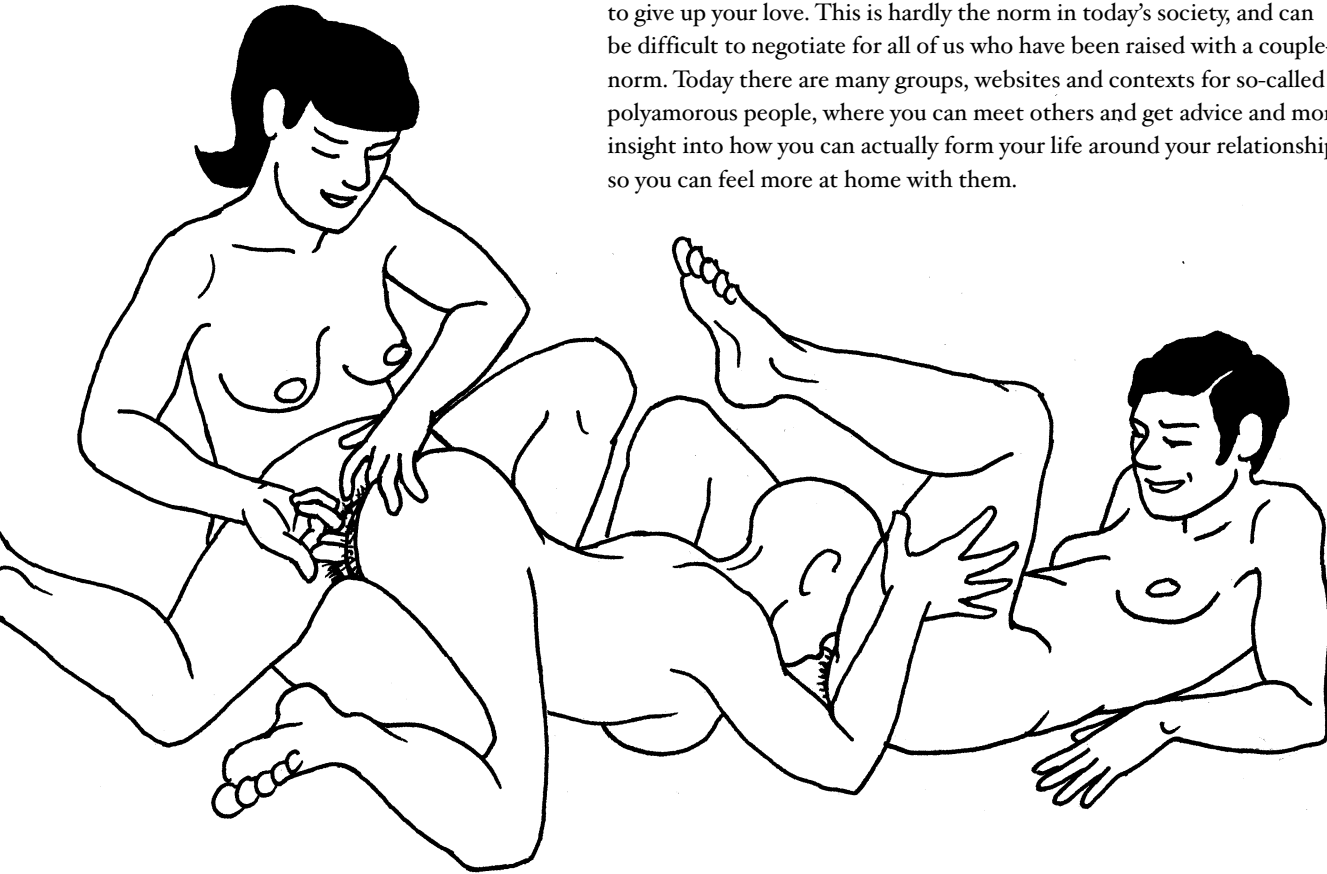
“ When you become an adult, around the time you reach your 40s or 50, sex gets easier because you stop caring so much about what other people think about everything. I’m living in a threesome now, and that also takes the game further. It’s not necessarily more fun, but when you’re seeing two people at the same time, you get a new feeling for erotic exchange, and in a whole new way. You get less and less afraid of doing something wrong, being wrong or ending up wrong, it never becomes routine and so it’s more demanding. Because of course you take on a responsibility when you go to bed with someone, to do your absolute best for the person you’re having sex with. I’m hopeless myself, because during orgasm it’s hard for me to think of anyone but myself, ha ha. The day will surely come when I don’t find sex to be fun anymore, but it hasn’t happened yet and I just turned 75.

Birgitta Stenberg, author



intimacy and freedom. If “love conquers all”, that’s because it’s stronger than a temporary passion.

Many feel that it’s most ideal to live in several important relationships at the same time. Or you might feel that you have no choice when you fall in love with more than one person and would be miserable if you had to give up your love. This is hardly the norm in today’s society, and can be difficult to negotiate for all of us who have been raised with a couple-norm. Today there are many groups, websites and contexts for so-called polyamorous people, where you can meet others and get advice and more insight into how you can actually form your life around your relationships, so you can feel more at home with them.



where the girls at?

The bar is of course a classic pick-up joint, no less for women looking for women. In large cities you can often find clubs, bars, pubs and cafés that are specifically aimed at women, or mixed places where there's no heterosexual norms about who's picking up who.

There's also no guarantee that the people you are interested in happen to be playing floor hockey at your local LGBT organization, or that they hang out at the local gay watering-hole. Women are everywhere, and as long as you're not discriminating against certain sexual identities, the world is full of potential sex-partners. There is no way of telling if a girl is hot for other women; what you can get a feeling for is if she's hot for you. Even people who believe that they're only interested in a certain gender can be won over when the right person presses the right buttons at the right time. Even if most women, as well as men, are brought up inside a heterosexual norm for how relationships should be formed and life should be structured, the desire and willingness to experiment, discover and experience often reaches far beyond the rules that we set up for ourselves. An awareness that that's how we work is the sexiest attitude imaginable, and the best pick-up device you could have.

sex online

If you're looking to meet someone, the Web is unbeatable. Girls looking for sex with girls can be found not only in homo-oriented meeting-sites, but also in mixed or hetero-oriented sites where they may be looking for both men and women. If you're brave enough to put up with being spammed by guys even if you're only looking for women, you can create

I lay on my side and kissed The C-Cup, who was touching me with her beautiful pianist fingers, so nice that I could have come in five seconds if I hadn't forced myself to think about infrastructure, energy-efficient heating, factory farming and national economy. At the same time, Bob entered her from behind and licked one of her ears. A wave of tingles and warm feelings of happiness washed over me. This was as overwhelmingly amazing as the best love-making multiplied by two. Double of everything, and I was in the kingdom of heaven.

Translated from the novel *Trekant* ['Threesome'] by Mian Lodalen, FORUM 2005



“ *The last time I had sex was maybe two weeks ago, me and my friend were lying around and making stuff up like we usually do. It's like foreplay: we give each other a story. Then we sleep together, though not every time. We have a really clean friendship and no romantic feelings for each other or anything. It's just about having a good time, not about other things that sex can be.*

*I think that stories are a lot sexier than pictures. The build-up of feelings, like before they get each other in the movie *Fucking Åmål*, that's amazingly erotic! I get the most turned on when she's telling me about someone that I can't have. When I've got a one-way crush on someone, I want to hear stories about her because in a way it can help me to get closer anyhow. And in the stories I always get to sleep with the person in the end!”*

Maria Lönn, psychology student obsessed with femme-inist slut actions

a profile where you describe exactly what you're after. Every wish is normal on the Internet – it's no stranger to “just want sex” than to search for a life-partner.

Meeting someone you've made contact with on the Internet, the feeling of being chosen, meeting up win-or-lose, can also be something entirely unique. It's easier to free yourself from the regular prejudices and expectations and keep yourself open before you meet, whether it's just about sex or if you're looking for a relationship. The right to be whoever we want on the web also carries along a certain risk: your dream girl may not be at all who you think she is. Deciding to meet in a public place can be smart, so that you're on “neutral” ground. But the feeling of meeting the unexpected is also what makes Internet dating so exciting.

The web is also a beacon of information about sex in all forms. You can find discussion groups in most web communities where you can easily and anonymously read other people's thoughts and share your own. Reading what other people write about sex on their sites, blogs or by looking at what clubs they're in can broaden your views. On the Internet, you participate in creating what sex is; through depictions in words and images, your perspectives and experiences become real for others.

Some people use the banter in a chat room as a good way to get turned on. It can be a way to try out new sides of yourself and live out your fantasies. This kind of kick is something unique in itself and not just a type of foreplay before a physical meeting. Just because you get turned on by the idea of having sex with women, or with people you don't know, it doesn't mean that you're prepared to translate your fantasies into physical encounters. But it's a good way to test out your feelings.



 **RFSL** *The Swedish Federation for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Rights*

ADDRESS Box 350, 101 26 Stockholm > VISITING ADDRESS Sveavägen 57-59 > PHONE NUMBER +46 [8] 501 629 00 > www.rfsl.se > www.rfslungdom.se

PRODUCTION: *ZIE* > ILLUSTRATIONS: BITTE ANDERSSON > PRINT: NORRA SKÅNE OFFSET 2008 > ORIGINAL TITLE: BRUDSEX, SWEDEN 2007 > TRANSLATION INA WOOD & ULRICA DAHL