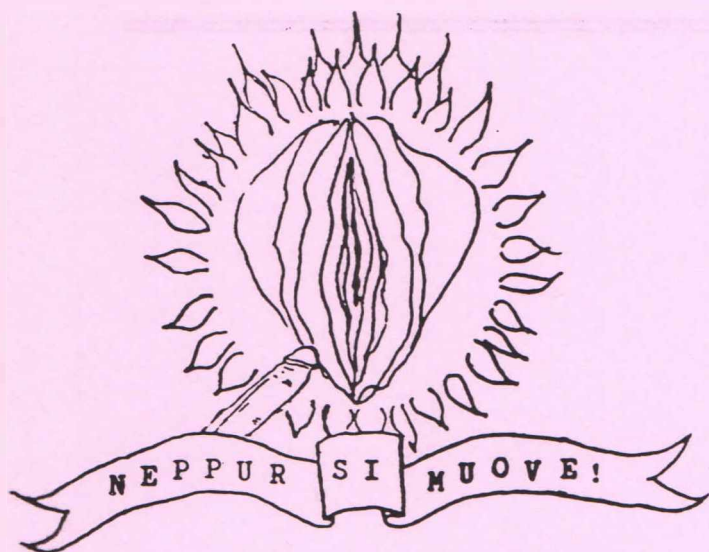


majoon

n u m b e r o n e



MAJOON, A Fanzine of Advanced Sexual Politics, is uttered and published by Mog Decarnin of 512-B Cole Street, San Francisco, CA 94117. Due to incipient unemployment, MAJOON is still not available for the usual; only 100 issues are printed, and distributed to people of known rationality -- one per household unless you beg and plead and hint that you are about to break up with your lover/roommate/other. Return of unwanted MAJOONS deeply appreciated, or just ask to get off my list.

This is MAJOON #1.

But I warn you it's not that simple....

Table of Malcontents

I Pub My Ish.....	1
Wherein much is explained and gripes aired.	
Ask Ms. Science.....	22
The Flea Question	
Found Loose in Mails.....	4
The Sex Question.....	9
Surprise and Fear	
Who Knows What Evil... ..	17
by Stacy Scott	
An Obvious Need for Privacy.....	19
by Faye Anne Meyer	
One Last Loc.....	21

Cover: Ole Kvern

All other art thish: moi, with the loan of Cheryl's rubber stamps.

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Inserts: The Sex Question Answer Form

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And now -- the fanzine
you've all been waiting
for -- Tunt-ta-da-DA --
MAJOON NUMBER ONE!

In our last episode,
you will recall, MAJOON
2 debuted with articles,
reviews, a story (or
invitation), art by Shay
Barsabe and Cheryl Cline,
and answers to the ques-
tion "What surprised you
about sex?"

Your psychic editor
knows what you're think-
ing (also if you've been
bad or good -- did you
loc #2 or not?) The
question floating to the fore in 100 simultaneous minds is "#1? 18 months after
#2?"

Return with us now to those days of yesteryear when Ole Kvern, over some kinda
Chinese food in the Richmond District, promised me, vowed with hand over heart and
after hardly any whining and pleading on my part that he would draw me just such a
cover as I'd envisioned in my fondest dreams, illustrating a certain scene in
MASQUE WORLD (whence the title "MAJOON"). Time passed, as is its wont. A careless
remark to Cheryl Cline ("I'd ask you for a cover, but I don't imagine you could do
this sort of thing with rubber stamps.") brought almost by return mail two stunning
(and sexy) rubberstamped covers. Perfect for future issues, but of course #1 must
have the "namesake" cover. I typed up its innards and sent a politely worded
reminder ("AHEM.") north on the wings of USPS.

In due course MAJOON was ready to roll, Shay poised at the Free Photocopying Site,
orange and lavender paper laid in -- no cover illo. Right. Issue One will wait,
then. On to #2! Cheryl's cover (though she scoffs at the idea) happened to cry
out esthetically for a number "2" in the bottom right hand corner, whereas a "1"
would have looked awkward and could have been mistaken for an "L", rendering the
title MAJOONL -- an unlikely but, in fandom, not impossible word.

I would like to claim that all the time that's elapsed since #2 appeared was spent
patiently waiting for Ole to finish his cover, and I could probably get away with it
too, if I didn't send any copies of this issue to Seattle. "But that would be
wrong." The truth is, Ole had drawn part of the projected cover -- a delightfully
elaborate candy box -- long since. When he finally abandoned the rest of the concept
(Ossian Chimeroon proffering said box to the reader) as superfluous and finished the
cover design as you see it, I was caught with only a few paltry Sex Question replies
typed. Time once more did its thing, seeping through cracks in the dyke of will
and forming large pools of guilty green ichor. Was it even now too late to stem the
flood of self-reinforcing sloth/guilt/aversion? No! No! All those wonderful,
often very personal and sometimes painful replies to Questions 1 & 2 must not
moulder unpubbed beneath the shifting dunes of my unanswered correspondence.

Those of you who've done it know the herculean surge it took to get A Very Late
Ish under weigh. But after that first mighty heave it actually becomes -- fun
again! What is this mysterious force that scares us off from doing things we like
& want to do? That makes them, after any hiatus, bugaboos, tasks, Augean stables?
One supposes it has something to do with Authority Figures looming over the left
shoulder growling "Do it -- or else!" and over the right shoulder barking "Don't
you dare!" (Canine imagery compliments of my subconscious.)

Be that as it may, MAJOON One blossoms into an entity even as I write. And seems
an appropriate place to catch the lot of you up on the last year and a half of the
true story of my life.

=====

...he was full of an avenging fury. Someone had actually tried to murder him, to shoot him in cold blood as he sat at his typewriter; it was a monstrous thing, and he experienced though a hundred times more intensely, the feeling that constrains so many Englishmen to write to the Times.

James Hilton, Was It Murder?

=====

The real reason MAJOON One is so late is -- I got a job. After temp work and freelance writing for several years, it was (is) hard to adjust to what has been so aptly dubbed "the daily grind". I work for Lyn Paleo at the San Francisco AIDS Foundation. At first, 11-hour workdays weren't uncommon -- and I've put in a few of them recently, too --but even at a more moderate 8-hours-plus-commute it's amazing how a job cuts into your time. Lyn and I, with Eric Garber, did manage to edit an anthology of lesbian and gay sf/f entitled WORLDS APART (not to be confused with the Haldeman book), which has received nice reviews and is making loot for its small-press publisher. Also since I last pubbed, I did win one of those \$1,000 Elrons, and WRITERS OF THE FUTURE, VOLUME II has my story "The Book of Time" inside. Pro sf publication! It would've been the ideal time to finish all those 3-page (or 30-page) story sprouts in the file drawer, but I had this job, see... And I was never one of those who rose at 5 to write for two hours before work, etc. To do creative work I seem to need perfect vistas of sacrosanct uninterrupted time stretching in all directions.

From ghoulies and ghosties
And long-legged beasties
And things that go bump in the night,
Good Lord deliver us.

Not that I never wake up at 5.

See, I have these upstairs neighbors.

They don't get up at five either. No, what they do is, they set their alarm clock for five. They sleep right over my head. When the alarm clock goes off -- at 5 -- it wakes me up. They turn off the alarm, that is, they hit the snooze alarm. Eight minutes later the alarm goes off again. Eight minutes after that it goes off again. This goes on for at least 60 minutes. I am now wide awake.

They aren't. Often as not they don't get up till hours later. On days when they do, they put on their hard-soled shoes. I offered to install a carpet in their bedroom, but they prefer wood floors. Then there are the times when the alarm doesn't wake them even enough to trigger the Snooze Alarm Slap. 25 minutes, once, they drifted in pleasant slumber while this beeping noise, which resembles an anti-theft device on a car in tone and volume, beguiled their dreams. Then there was the time they went on vacation, leaving the alarm set for 5:40. It runs for about an hour before shutting off. The landlady refused to go into the apartment because these charming women had installed a burglar alarm, and she didn't want to set it off. The fuse-boxes for all the apartments are in a little alley outside my door. Let us merely say, I solved the problem of silencing the thrice-cursed machine. Hope they weren't storing much frozen food.

But of course, since they get up so early they also go to sleep early, n'est-ce pas? Ha ha, no no, my friend, you reason falsely because you base your logic on the premise that these are normal human beings rather than fiends from the nethermost pit. No, they don't go to bed at night. No. Instead, they move furniture. I'm not sure if it's a religious ritual or merely a hobby. On a typical night they'll start sometime between 11:00 p.m. and 1:30 a.m., though sometimes a bit later. Vigorous furniture rearrangement will continue for between one and two hours, depending, one supposes, on how deeply they have been touched by the muse of interior decoration. One of them

Found LOOSE in Mails

Kris Sellgren I would love it if you would run, in your next ish, a description of what one does or doesn't do to catch AIDS. Everyone is always so coy about "exchanges of bodily fluids" but never says what that really means. Semen seems to be bad news, if you swallow it or let it be deposited in one's ass or vagina. What else is dangerous? Rubbing semen on one's skin? Penetration without ejaculation? French kissing? Cunnilingus? Fist fucking? Sharing an ice cream cone?

Majoon was a delight, which I thank you for sending. What surprised me about Majoon was how cautious your writing is there, compared to your openness in AWAPA.

((I never thought it would take me this long to do MAJOOON 1, or I would have answered your questions long ago. Semen on the skin is considered safe, if there are no open cuts -- though as I heard one person put it, if you think you have no cuts on your hands, try putting your hand into a bowl of lemon juice. For this reason fisting is not considered very safe for the fister; for the fistee it is unsafe because it causes small tears (occasionally larger ones) in the lining of the rectum and (less often) the vagina, thus making it easier for the virus to enter the bloodstream if there is virus present. Penetration without ejaculation isn't completely safe on account of pre-ejaculate fluid, which does contain small amounts of the virus if the man is infected -- that's speaking from the woman's point of view. It is also unsafe for the man. Until recently people were running around who ought to have known better saying men couldn't get AIDS from women. I was running around after them saying "Why not? Why are you saying that? We don't even have a large enough pool of infected women to TELL yet, and why should it be any different from any other STD?" The answers I got never made sense to me and now CDC statistics bear out my unpopular doomsaying: men can and do get AIDS from women. French kissing is listed as "possibly safe". No case of AIDS from kissing has been documented; but you gotta figure if they are French kissing they are also usually fucking. Time will tell. Even outright unprotected oral sex seems to be rarely implicated in AIDS transmission -- but it's not recommended that one try it with an infected person. Needless to say, all these activities together wouldn't give you AIDS if the partner weren't infected; the problem is how to be sure of that, since even immediately after a negative antibody test one might be harboring virus that hadn't produced antibodies -- say from unsafe sex two weeks before the test blood was drawn. Sharing eating utensils and ice cream cones is not recommended though probably not risky; we need more info. Of course you can wash a fork, which renders it perfectly safe, but washing the ice cream cone might have less than satisfying results.//AWAPA, for nonfans, is A Women's Apa and please don't ask me to explain what an apa is. I guess in some ways I did feel I was being more cautious, but in other ways I felt more open -- for instance I seem never to write very "literary" in AWA -- at least not in the past few years.))

Walt Willis I'm sorry to be so slow in thanking you for Majoon 2 (airmailed too, gosh) but I doubted whether anything I could say would be of interest to you, our backgrounds being so different. I kept thinking of "How different from the home life of our dear Queen". No not that kind of queen silly. (I just looked it up in the ODQ and it's attributed to a British matron in the audience for Sarah Bernhardt's Cleopatra.) But anyway I thought I would thank you and say how much

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I enjoyed it, especially the..er..semenar.

Patrick Nielsen Hayden Hard to believe but true -- in grim determination to catch up on all the fmz that've stacked up around here over the last several months, I just now read MAJOON. No time, no space, no brains to write the loc it deserves, but please know that I liked it, I liked it -- hell, I actually read it, all, every word, a damned sight more than I do most fanzines that come in these days. Please keep us on your list?

Allyn Cadogan This has to do with my new resolution to loc fanzines I like. I liked MAJOON. (and yes, the "2" is esthetically more pleasing than a "1" would have been; on the other hand, next issue could have a "1", if that looks nicer than a "3", or you could go with a "2.5", or a "1.98".... just remember -- don't let Cheryl push you around on this; she can be tough, but it's your fanzine!)

I thought the responses to your sex question were great, and great fun, though I was surprised that most people didn't prefer to be anonymous; some of that stuff was personal. ...Although I found the various essays on sexuality quite fascinating, what I enjoyed the most were the two snapshots of Mog: the trip report and the cookbook made me want to see previous lettersubs. I also loved the neopunk layout and ToC and varicolored pages. More?

((Thanks! Especially for your support on the loaded issue of numbering. It was a hard decision but I felt it was right, you know?))

Artie Bressan Thanks for the words on ABUSE. More importantly, sadly & personally -- the article on Bobbi was most appreciated.

I live in N.Y.C. now -- after 12 years in S.F. -- and I get news from friends but the hard stuff takes a while.

I knew Bobbi from years of street & bar/baths fun -- & so it was a bummer to find out about his death -- but the eulogy & the picture were wonderful in the way Bobbi would've liked it.

Anyway, I'm working on a new dramatic AIDS feature ((BUDDIES -- ed.)) & hence this hurried note -- my time is non-existent at this moment -- but I had to thank you for your issue #2.

Kate Schaefer A few words about AIDS: I am really appalled by the LIFE cover saying that now anyone can get it. 1) It suggests that now AIDS is a serious threat since people other than the dregs of society who ought to be wiped out like the scum they are can get it, whereas before who cared? and 2) anyone could get it before, too, a fact which simply gets denied. A factor which seems to slow down transmission of AIDS which is not mentioned in the pamphlet you included in the fanzine and which doesn't get much press in general (though a number of the people I've mentioned it to have known about it) is the use of spermicides, diaphragm creams or jellies or foams used with condoms.

((Nonoxynol-9 is an ingredient in some products which does kill the AIDS virus. However, used alone it's not fully effective in preventing the transmission of AIDS during sex. But it is certainly a good second line of defense in case a condom breaks (which hopefully won't happen to anyone who reads the enclosed Hot and Healthy Times). Some people, though, have an allergic reaction to nonoxynol-9; like most other products, it should be tested out on a patch of your skin before you use it lavishly. Incidentally, some women have asked if a diaphragm protects them from transmission; unfortunately, no. While it covers the cervix, it gives no protection against virus invading small, usually unnoticed breaks in the lining of the vagina.// Yes, I was appalled by the LIFE piece too, particularly the inside editorial, and wrote to tell them so.))

Lucy Huntzinger MAJOON was really terrific! Thanks for publishing such an interesting variety of stuff -- best thing I've read in ages. The illos are neat. The Danish saga was fascinating as was The Sex Question section. In fact, TSQ was so amusing I've reread it several times since.

((Cheryl and Shay, take a bow. And Lucy, if you should find yourself inspired to do any illos around the concept of sex -- or, for that matter, food, buses (more on them later this), fandom, rock and roll, or other topics in MAJOON -- we here at the editorial offices would love a peek at them.))

Avedon Carol I used to be pretty brave about flying until my trip to the Chicago worldcon. I was sitting next to a guy who had been flying twice a week for the last several years, and he was talking a lot about all his boring business trips. Then the food was served, and no sooner had it been set down than the ride got so bumpy that food started flying all over the cabin. We desperately tried to hold the little food serving dishes down but there was no way to control peas and carrots, which were actually visible above the seats in front of us. I was still not terribly worried until I noticed that the frequent flyer next to me was white as a sheet and muttering, "This is bullshit. This is bullshit," over and over as he tried to secure his tray.

And Tom Whitmore's remark was good. Coincided very nicely with a conversation I'd had with someone a couple months back about how parents try to prevent their daughters from being "used" by men sexually, and one of the things they do is impose curfews which, of course, don't prevent sexual activity, but do prevent the more warm and personal aspects of intimacy, like actually sleeping together. And it

really does make it feel more tawdry, you know. Cheap. Maybe it would be wiser to tell your kid, "If you're going to fuck, for god's sake sleep with whoever it is afterwards. Don't you dare come home until you've both slept and woken up together."

Of course, I identified with your own remarks--I remember when I first found out what you had to do to have babies, I was (with all the other girls in our cabin at camp) just horrified. Oooo yuck gross! And I never have gotten over the fact that boys always acted like their funny-looking equipment was supposed to be superior to ours. ...I only wish Freud could have known the reaction girls really have to penises. Envy!? Good god, for something that looks like oversized warts?

Will Newman Afraid of flying, are you? My sister used to be so, also, and her job required her to fly frequently. It was difficult for her to acquit her duties as an engineer appropriately after becoming embalmed at 6 or 7 in the morning in the airport bar. She took a fear of flying course and got "cured". Told me, my sister did, that it isn't actually the flight people fear but the destination.

I'd say it is more likely that people fear arriving at the ground prior to the destination; as one airline described its financial posture after a crash: a one-time conversion of equipment.

((I'm with you. I've never seen any need to explain, via arcane metaphorical thinking, why human beings fear being 30,000 feet in the air with no visible means of support. They should just get real and offer "Coffee, tea, or Thorazine?"))

Terry Garey At the end of your AIDS article instead of feeling depressed I felt like going out looking for trouble.

((I can relate. If everybody who read or heard misinformation on AIDS would write or call in to correct it, or if they didn't hear/read anything ask why not, it would probably give the media more incentive to do it right.))

Anonymous woman You can pass on to Loren McGregor that I am another person who finds anal sex incredibly painful. I also know a bi man who finds it painful. I've tried all sorts of things to make it hurt less, both because of my own interest (I really like a finger in my ass, so one would think...) and because of my partners' interest. Lubrication (saliva, KY jelly, vaseline, baby oil) helps but not enough. All positions (me on top, bottom, side, and kitty-style) are equally awful. If I spend hours getting slowly used to it and relaxing, and there's enough lubrication, I can almost enjoy it, but as soon as my partner gets near orgasm and stops moving slowly and gently, I panic, tighten up, start to hurt, and then start to cry. This is a clear demonstration of the difference between fantasy and reality.

((In the old days I would suggest really slathering on heavy duty lube such as Crisco; now they say it will weaken a condom (before I thought it was only petroleum based lubes that did this -- wonder if anyone's actually done any research?) made of latex. With Crisco amazing things are possible, but even so it might remain simply something that's better to fantasize about, for some people. I too know a gay man who found anal sex invariably painful, and stopped doing it. By the way, in case anyone wondered, Crisco is not good for vaginal sex; too hard to get rid of afterwards. It also forms an excellent medium for germ culture.))

Constant Voyeur I've been musing on Jeanne Bowman's answer to question #1 "if a woman doesn't come during p-i-v ((penis in vagina)) sex, why bother? I mean, why have coitus?" Well, speaking as a woman who doesn't usually come during p-i-v sex (though I sometimes surprise myself and him) ...I don't see orgasm as the exclusive goal of sex. (Sex) is one of the few truly playful things that adults are allowed to do. Or allow themselves to do. As a matter of fact I prefer the orgasms I have by hand and mouth--and lets hear it for men and women who are good with their hands and mouths! Hooray!--to the "p-i-v" orgasms because if something's stuffed inside you it just seems to get in the way of all that wonderful rippling action.

So why do I bother? Why does a bisexual woman bother with men if she doesn't even like p-i-v sex all that much? Well, because even though it doesn't usually drive me to orgasm, the feeling of a cock sliding in and out of your innermost tissues is a unique pleasure, better even than eating ice cream, which has got to be one of life's most sensual joys. (Even though I've never had an orgasm eating ice cream, I'm reasonably certain it must have happened to someone out there.) I miss p-i-v sex when I don't have it. I miss it when I'm with a woman--there always comes that point when I feel like being stuffed, and a finger or a hand just won't do at all. There's nothing like a penis, nothing like it in the world. It's just--comforting. Like sucking your thumb or something. I like a penis in me after I've had a few orgasms. I like to fall asleep with a man on top of me, coming. (I especially like men who aren't insulted by this perverse desire of mine.) Yeah, I guess in my way I'm a great fan of missionary position sex, too. The ultimate in comforters. I've never found anything laughable about penises--I take them very seriously.

Linda Frankel Re "The She Wolf" -- My first lesbian lover, Kate, had been institutionalized for being pregnant at 16 and then she was institutionalized a second time for having sex with me. I was devastated and thought it was my fault, though intellectually I knew it wasn't. I really had nothing to do with it. This was her father's way of controlling her.

...the only other zine I loc these days is the K/S newsletter NOT TONIGHT SPOCK. This reminds me. You never did see my article for NTS on cock size, did you?

((Er, no, I don't think I did. For nonfans, K/S = Kirk/Spock, the hundreds of fictional and critical writings based on the concept of the STAR TREK heroes as gay lovers, printed only in the non-profit fannish network for copyright reasons.))



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????????????????????????????????????????????????????????????
????????????????????THE SEX QUESTION????????????????????
????????????????????????????????????????????????????????????

Last time I asked this question; and more answers came in for this issue...

WHAT SURPRISED YOU ABOUT

SEX?

Kate Schaefer Finding out what surprised other people about sex was entertaining and informative, and of course made me think about what surprised me about sex: a lot of things. First, I suppose, the pain, and that he could be having fun when I wasn't (I had, the first time, been having a lot of fun, right up to the point when the penis entered me, and then I had negative fun for several years or maybe only about half a minute until he came, having ignored my frantic urging that he get out because it hurt). For several years after that, I continued to be surprised that men had orgasms, and women with whom I discussed sex said they had orgasms, but I didn't. Once I started having orgasms, I was surprised that I hadn't before, and a while after that, I was surprised at how easy (comparatively, that is) it is to have orgasms.

What else? The first time I had anal sex it surprised me that it didn't hurt. I was very drunk at the time. The second time I had anal sex it surprised me how horribly it hurt; I was sober. There is little likelihood of a third time.

Ole Kvern What surprises me was some of the things that surprise other people. I actually had the mechanical procedure of sex all figured out by somewhere in first grade (though I guess I did find it surprising at that point that I was the only kid in school that, incoherently, madly, wanted to fuck--you see, everything I'd read insisted (at least to my logical little mind) it was the ultimate human experience, and a lot of fun besides, and I didn't feel that I should let it wait), and in explaining to others encountered surprise and shock (akin to your "every civilized feeling revolts..."). This surprised me. No, see, there's this organ and that organ and this is what they do. What could be weird about it? It's what they were made to do, more or less. Other kids shied away. Eventually an older boy took me aside and explained how it really was, which seemed to have more to do with what I knew were digestive system functions than reproductive. However, I nodded my head and stopped trying to explain--even going back to check my reference sources to make sure I hadn't been in error. Still, I wanted to fuck. Or at least to masturbate to some satisfying conclusion. That I could do neither left me in a state of perpetual, unfocussed longing for years. I eventually did masturbate to orgasm when I was around 10 or so, and invented the siphon at the same time (though the two discoveries occurred at the same time they were not exactly related)....

Did this scientific understanding acheived at an early age prepare me better for the actual practice of lovemaking? At age 17? On a deserted mountain road in a blue Ford pickup? Near-hysterical laughter follows. Um, No.

Walt Willis I remember marvelling how anything that was so much fun should be free (you didn't even have to buy special clothes) and that none of the poetic descriptions in novels were anything like. I only ever came across one author who made an honest attempt to describe what an orgasm felt like. "A flock of doves flew up my ass," he said.

Kris Sellgren Sexual surprises...well, before I was physically intimate with men, I was really baffled by heterosexual intercourse. I knew men's penises grew longer when they were aroused (having discovered this during show and tell with neighborhood children when I was 8 or so), but I also knew penises hung down on men, while vaginas on wimmin went more or less up. So the only way I could envision intercourse was head-to-toe; otherwise, part A just wouldn't be at the right angle to fit in part B. The geometry, however, ran counter to everything I'd ever heard described about the missionary position. It was a great revelation to me when I discovered a) erect penises were flexible in their orientation and b) they had a natural tendency to stand up rather than hang down when erect. A mystery solved.

Janet Wilson That just about everything I'd heard about it had been an exaggeration one way or the other.

Anne Laurie Logan What surprised me about sex? Mostly, that I was so good at it. Normally, I'm a physical klutz -- there's never been a sport that comes "naturally" to me. But, form the very first time I tried masturbating (in a communal college dormitory bathroom stall, with a copy of the brand-new OUR BODIES, OURSELVES for an instruction sheet), everything's worked with astonishing efficiency. This, of course, is not something I could have been "told", no matter how liberated my social background: it's just an unexpected little "bonus", like having perfect pitch, or the kind of "nose" perfumiers cultivate. The disadvantage being, of course, that unlike perfect pitch or a natural gift for shooting baskets, having a "natural rhythm" for sex is not something one can exactly show off in public...

Anon. Woman Finding out that when I did it myself, it felt better (on a purely physical basis) than when someone else did it to/with me, and that this was not only okay, but a fairly common response among women.

Anonymous Woman It was more sloppy (and I didn't even use a diaphragm then!) and more, how you say, tactile than I'd expected. I'd read too many books where sex was described in very emotional or ethereal or plumbing-related terms -- I found it much more a matter of touch, of physical sensations in one's hands in particular and skin in general, than I had imagined.

Anon. Woman What surprised me about sex? How similar all the variations in person and position really are.

Yvonne Coopmans Sex could be fun, or very unfun, depending on mood, partner, etc.

Donya White That I could laugh in bed is the best surprise. At first I was mortified by anything that was not all passion & perfection, but now I find shared laughter is one of the best parts of the encounter.

Eva Isaksson The smell of course. I don't mean the down there smells, rather the unexpected introduction of someone's secretions in your nose. The first woman I had real sex with told me that she was breeding pigs at her work -- artificially inseminating them -- with a ♀ symbol on her dress. Immediately I started thinking that her whole body smelled of pigs, and it felt funny. Later, whenever I met her, I noticed her smell, and thought that it was sexy. My sense of smell is quite poor, by the way. Or just selective.

Jerry Kaufman I'd like to try to write my bit about sex again, this time saying a little more about the woman involved...

When I was in the earliest part of my college career, I made a habit of hanging out at the college "head" bar (or so I thought of it), where all the intellectuals and rebels could be found. I didn't drink beer, at the time, so my big thrills were drinking Cokes (and reading the bottoms of the bottles to find out how far they'd come), playing the jukebox (entire albums!), and attending the after hours parties. I never knew anyone at these parties except the several friends I came with.

One night I somehow fell into conversation with a woman I thought was rather plain but friendly and a bit shy. Her name was Danny (I think a nickname for Danielle), and she was dressed in a sweatshirt and wire-rim glasses. Somehow (again) I went home with her. (My memories are rather fragmentary.)

We undressed for bed, and she asked me if I had any prophylactics. (I don't remember her exact words.) The thought had never crossed my mind, me being naive and perhaps even stupid. When I said no, she gestured at the closet and told me to look in it. I found one in a little plastic packet like candy in a clear wrapper. It was my first rubber.

I'd...gotten an image...of "a package of rubbers" being a cardboard holder with a mass of unfurled cigar shapes standing straight up, each in its own slot, waving gently as the box would be taken from the shelf. Instead I found this wrapper, which I had to tear, and this rolled thing that I had to unroll onto myself.

We did the thing (made sandwiches as the tummy-belly men in Hothouse called it), and it wasn't entirely satisfactory. I withdrew from Danny, detumescent, and realized I was missing something. "It's got to be around here somewhere," I said.

"Yes," said Danny. She felt around for a moment, reached inside herself, and fished out a sorry-looking rubber baglet.

That was two surprises, or perhaps three (I was very surprised that Danny had prophylactics around, not realizing that a sexually active and smart woman might want to provide herself with the protection that an unthoughtful man would forget). I had more in a year or so, when I discovered that Danny was lesbian, and had taken me to bed more out of pity than anything else. This discovery came some time after my sexual adventure with her, and I had not seen her for some time. I now met her friends and housemates, and began to talk to her, about books and so forth.... I'm sorry to have to say of myself that I had to have my male ego punctured to treat Danny as a human being, but it's true, and I still need to be punctured from time to time now.

Will Newman Orgasms surprised me and that it could feel so good.

Amy Thomson I think the thing that surprised me most of all about sex was how much fuss the world kicked up when I lost my virginity. I remember it well. It was Superbowl Sunday, the Miami Dolphins were set to kick the ass of the Washington Redskins for the second, or third time in a row. It was a home game, and all of Miami was glued to their TV sets, or out hocking their grandmothers for tickets. I had somehow managed to lure my Boyfriend out to the grimy mattress in the musty loft for the usual illicit petting and necking session. One thing led to another and in the ensuing passionate clench, we committed (*gasp*) sexual intercourse for The Very First Time. Cars began honking, people started cheering, dogs were barking, bells rang. To the best of my knowledge, the Earth moved in its orbit. There was Joy in Mudville.

"My Goodness," sez I, already beginning to recover from post-hymeneal introspection and not quite orgasmic rapture. "I didn't realize that losing one's

virginity was such a big deal. Does it show? Do I glow with that certain quiet knowledge that differentiates Girl from Woman?"

"Nah," sez The Boyfriend, "The Dolphins just won another Superbowl. Wonder what the score was."

Kathleen Barrett "What surprised you about sex?" That a strange, tall, good-looking man would seek out a suicidal waitress in order to drive her and her three very young children hundreds of miles away from friends and family, park her in the hospital with his miscarriage solely for the purpose of showing his weenie to the 7 year old girl and the 4 year old girl. (He told me so years later. It was his childhood ambition to have sexual access to little girls.) (Where was the little boy? I can't remember. I only know I tried to run away from the crazy man the next morning and got caught.

You have to be pretty desperate to run away at age 7 in a strange state, especially leaving your little sister to the strange man.

I made up for it though, by protecting her from his sexual interest for the next 10 years.)

I had a nightmare about him again last night, 30 years after that first night. It was dark and I was drugged. He kept poking his hands at my crotch. And I was trying to kick his throat out without getting him mad before I succeeded. Endless feeling of being helpless.

((further surprises:))

That some people would/did kiss and lick parts of my body that I wasn't supposed to touch, wash, look at, or even think about.

That men didn't know all (or any?) about partner sex, as I'd been led to believe they surely would. I've met a cute con artist or two but Ø, zero, zilch, sexually masterful men.

That partner sex could/did happen before dark and someplace besides a bedroom.

That so little partner sex happens. We're far more puritan than we think!

That a big cock, attached to a jerk, is nothing but boring. I believe this myth of bigger (cock) is better is put out by stockyard owners.

That nobody else can give me a better, more intense orgasm than I can give myself.

That the best technically penis-vagina sex I've had was with men whose emotional investment was in other men. Emotional distance aids concentration? I've puzzled about it for years.

That partner sex takes so much active mental concentration...if I don't concentrate, I often slip back into my old mental state of passively going thru the mechanical motions of penis-vagina sex. It seemed to me then when I was a child (and often seems to me now that I'm an adult) that I spent eons in that time-zone where I was impatiently/hopelessly waiting for Mac to quit using me for his totally self-involved masturbation.

That I need my own sexual fantasies to become aroused during partner sex.

That I have so many inhibitions when it comes to partner sex.

That arranging time with another person for sexual activity is so complex!

That women are so soft! to hug and hold.

Janet Bellwether What surprised me most about sex? How good it is. Some other womyn at school had some porn, & i'd read descriptions of orgasm on the order of "crescendo after crashing crescendo of mind-shattering ecstasy," & laughed, thinking the authors must surely be exaggerating. Oh girl, did i find out! After my first first hand (-cunt?) experience of the phenomenon, i thought back to that porn & laughed, happily, out of the other side of my mouth, at the pallid inadequacy of those descriptions.

Was there something you were once afraid of about sex that doesn't scare you any more?

This was the new question last ish. Anyone who hasn't answered it and would like to, feel free. The wide variety of answers to The Sex Question is pretty much MAJOON's raisin debtor, as they say.

Will Newman Fear in sex; take your choice: Girls, boys, hell, being caught.
 I was afraid that I would never break the habit of masturbation. I knew to continue meant insanity, perdition and ostracism from decent society but I couldn't keep my pubescent fingers off of my seemingly always erect penis. I never did break the habit so I guess practice eased my fear and the reality that I wouldn't go insane came to me as I passed into adulthood somewhat mentally stable. Girls were a fear. I could not imagine myself ever getting one (who would want me?) Even after my early stuttering attempts with them, I was sure I'd always be beating my meat instead of fucking "properly" with a female. In retrospect I know that I couldn't "get a woman." My ego in my youth required someone to choose me since I was so afraid of being turned down, laughed at. The turning point for me was L., who did choose me. (Talk about insanity.) Boys -- I was afraid they would see me staring. I was afraid they wouldn't. Masturbation changed my cosmogeny. The catholic church damned me and my overworked prick to hell for our transgressions. I didn't really want to go to hell so I tried to reform. I confessed my impure thoughts & deeds to the priest almost every Friday. Did the priest get a hard-on from having so many seventh and eighth grade boys discussing their masturbation with him in the darkened closet of the confessional? Saturdays were an agony of abstinence so that I could receive communion on Sunday. On Sunday nights I'd pull the shades of guilt about me as the last drops of my semen landed on my belly, to be wiped up by a dirty sock. The guilt and fear of hell became too much. I couldn't give up jacking off. I stopped believing in gods.

I think semen smells good (chloroxy sometimes) and tastes good, too!

Amy Thomson Q: Was there something you were once afraid of about sex that doesn't scare you any more?
 A: Getting Caught.
 Q: How did it change?
 A: Leaving home.

Avedon Carol My answer is NO--if anything, the reverse. I hadn't really expected it to hurt (except initially, but I thought it wasn't ever supposed to hurt after that), and yet it turned out to be really easy to get sore. And I don't think I used to ever believe that there was such a thing as unwanted pregnancy. I also thought boys were more like girls--I mean, that they thought of us pretty much the way we thought of them most of the time (as opposed to all the dire warnings my father used to give me about how they were different). But it's not very hard to get pregnant and to make matters worse, all the evidence is that a startlingly high percentage of males are really incapable of thinking of women as people. And all of those things actually made sex a lot scarier than I'd expected it to be.

Janet Bellwether Until i learned to masturbate successfully, what scared me about sex was that i might end up in bed with some rather

icky people in the course of keeping myself supplied with orgasms. While this was not an unreasonable fear, it was realized only once, with a one-night stand, & what happened wasn't scary, just nauseous. The morning after, the guy i'd picked up made a really nastily anti-gay remark to a faggot, & i thought, "& i just got out of bed with this? Exp!" For the next few days he came over at least once a day looking for me, but i always had my roommates tell him i was busy, out of town, dead -- anything -- & within a fortnight he'd become a Jesus freak. What is this devastating effect i have on men? (Now, i'd tell him why i didn't want anything to do with him.)

Kathleen Barrett I used to be (and sometimes still am) very afraid of tall men.

I think it changed primarily because the gap in heights between me age 7 and a 6 foot tall man got less and less as I grew up to 5'4".

I ran across other tall (to a child) child molesters as I grew up, but the ratio of non-molesters to molesters gradually widened until I could tell my chances were a lot better that I wouldn't have to deal sexually with perverted giants any more.

Jeanne Bowman It was funny, my first response to your next sex question was

"pregnancy" but after I finished reading MAJON, not surprisingly "AIDS" came to mind -- for more complicated reasons than the obvious, no matter how reasonable I am with information, my gut is not convinced by prophylaxis. The subtle AIDS response for me has to do with beekeeping & incomplete understanding of the immune system & seeing getting stung as an unusual stress . trouble.

((Ed. note: so far, there is no known connection between anything and special susceptibility to AIDS (or special immunity). Everything that has been proposed as a contributing factor to vulnerability has turned out to be simply an adjunct to a way of life that leads to exposure -- e.g., drugs. There is no evidence, for instance, that staying fit and eating right will be the slightest protection -- though they certainly can't hurt -- or that being a 98 pound weakling who lives on Coke and candy bars will make you more likely to contract AIDS if you are exposed. The reasons why so many people who have definitely been exposed to the HTLV-III virus have not (yet) contracted AIDS are unknown. But I see no reason why bee venom should be harmful -- it is actually used as a medicine in Europe, for arthritis.))

Anonymous Woman The only thing that's ever really scared me about sex, other than performance anxiety, and that disappeared when I found a partner with whom sex was/is fun, is discussing sex publicly, and that's why I want this response to be anonymous.

Kate Schaefer I used to be afraid that it would always hurt and that I would never have orgasms. Intercourse did hurt every time for the first year or so in which I was sexually active. I thought this was because I had an abnormally small vagina, although a gynecologist assured me that this was not so. He didn't go on to ask me about my sexual practices and give me some practical advice on how I could avoid pain, so he wasn't much help. He also prescribed the pill for me without investigating my family medical history or even describing alternatives, much less suggesting them. He was, in general, a jerk. Incidentally, because of him, I used to be somewhat afraid of gynecologists. Now I just go to women; also now I know what questions to ask.

I got over being afraid of intercourse always hurting because it stopped hurting; I got more experienced at sex and I began to have more considerate partners. It always strikes me as curious now that my major disastrous love affair in my early years in college was with a man reputed to be sexually very sophisticated because he had slept with many women. In fact, he wasn't very good in bed (my definition of "not very good in bed": inconsiderate toward one's partner, concerned with one's own orgasm to the exclusion of the partner's pleasure) and never even tried to figure out how I could have an orgasm. he was eight years older than I and supposed to be so experienced...a lot of his experience was in collecting maidenheads, and when

you specialize in virgins, you don't get practical experience in learning what works, what makes things fun. What he was best at was seduction, and he did that very well, flowers and champagne and little Chinese hole-in-the-wall restaurants. Later on I began sleeping with someone who said he was not a very good lover, as he suffered from premature ejaculation. He was, in fact, a great lover, because his orgasm occurred so early that he was still interested in sexual activity and he would go on to do things which made me more excited; or we would delay intercourse for a long time while engaging in foreplay so that he could have his orgasm near the time when I would be most excited: and lo, I began to have orgasms.

Also I used to be homophobic, before I knew that I knew any homosexuals, and I continued to be homophobic about male homosexuals even after I began sleeping with women. I think I still have some fear of male homosexuality, and I think you were the one who once wrote to me that some of the fear women have of male homosexuality is that straight men will discover that sex is better with men than it is with women and then they won't have any reason to make love with us any more. Most of that variety of fear is going away; whether sex with men is better than sex with women or not doesn't seem to have anything to do with why men choose to have sex with men or with women.

Constant Voyeur Growing up in the 50's and early 60's every girl's greatest fear was...getting pregnant, a fate much worse than, say, terminal cancer, or getting hit by a truck. Girls used to disappear from my high school without warning, never to be seen again, and we would whisper in the halls and the locker room, "She got pregnant? Did she? Oh, wow. How awful!" She might as well have been kidnapped by aliens and transported to another galaxy. People even 5 or 6 years younger than me can't imagine the terror we felt back in those dark ages when you needed your parents' permission (a signed form!) to visit Planned Parenthood if you were under 21, and of course nobody would go to their old family doctor --I mean, how could you? We had nothing but the rubbers most guys didn't even really know how to use. Most of us didn't have sex at all. Emko and the other foam methods available without prescription hadn't been invented yet. How exactly did you get pregnant, anyway? I had biologically (if not socially) enlightened parents, so at least I knew what was technically involved, but the rumors I heard at school were kind of seductively scary: "They were making out and he--you know what--and some of it got on her underwear and IT CRAWLED THROUGH AND UP INSIDE HER and she got pregnant even though she was a virgin. It's true! I swear it! Even the doctor couldn't believe it, but he said it could happen that way." "I know! It happened to my cousin, she sat on a bus where this guy had been doing it and it crawled inside her and that's how she had a baby...."

Of course, schizophrenic as the times were (aren't they always?) every girl's greatest desire was to have children....If you were married, it was a tragedy not to get pregnant. It was also, for reasons unknown, not so easy to get pregnant once you were married. No more immaculate conceptions on busses. Everyone had stories of aunts and cousins who tried for years to get pregnant and finally had to adopt a baby, one of those unwanted babies that caused young girls to drop from sight, no doubt, though no one actually came out and said this.

I was perhaps more terrified of pregnancy than the normal girl because somewhere inside (so deeply buried I couldn't admit it to myself until I was over thirty) I didn't want to have kids at all and so I remained for an embarrassingly long time a total virgin (I never even let a boy touch me) who was very careful about where she sat down on the bus. Several things happened--or was it one thing? The 60's --Suddenly everyone was "doing it", and not that many people were getting pregnant. Women were having illegal abortions in Mexico (anyone remember Dr. Alphonso Paris?) and living to tell about the experience--which wasn't in many cases so very dreadful at all. Women were signing their own permission slips to go to Planned Parenthood to get pills and diaphragms, and nobody ever found out! Some women even found their family doctors were more than willing to write a discreet prescription and say nothing to Mama. Emko and other foams appeared on drugstore shelves. And--most

revolutionary of all--abortion became legal!

I was able to have my first real male lover, with nothing to fear! Pregnancy was no longer the inevitable result of "pre-marital" sex. (I love the pretentiousness of that term "pre-marital", the automatic assumption that if you aren't married, you of course will be, I mean, isn't that what sex is all about, getting married and having babies?)

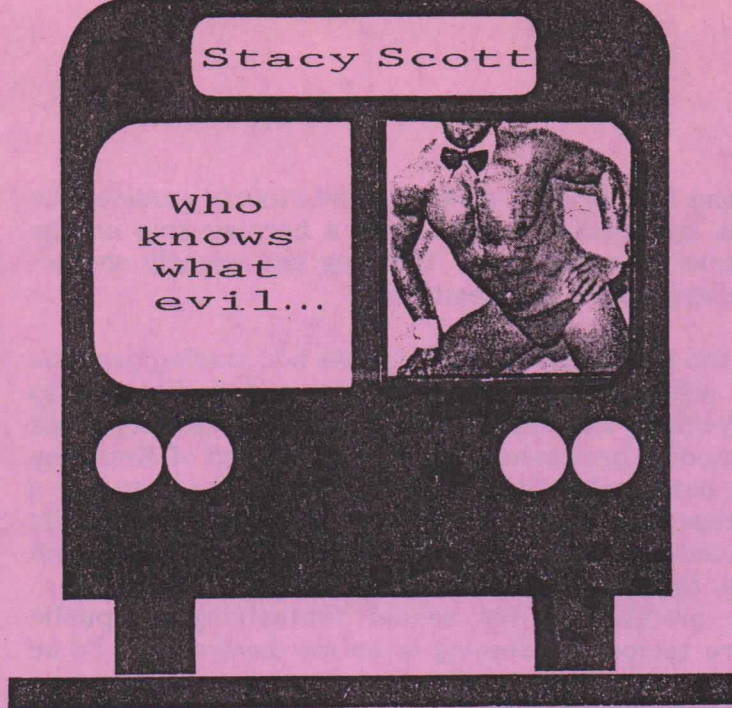
(This is as good a time as any to confess that I always seem to spell "underwear" "underware", which has got to be some sort of holdover from the 50's. But then, I also type "alove" for "alive" so maybe there's hope.)

We are dangerously close to returning to that golden era of peer sex counseling in the locker rooms, no available birth control, no abortion, kids scared to death of one of life's truly transcendent experiences. Of course, I'm not too scared any more, I'm 40 and reasonably confident that my fertility has declined significantly, and will be gone in another 10 years. What scares me is that there are so many people who don't remember the 50's at all, and who don't seriously think that abortion could become illegal again, that sex education could disappear from schools, that it could all happen again just like on TWILIGHT ZONE.....The more I think about it, the more I realize I'm still afraid!

Linda Frankel I had always believed on the basis of my mother's teaching that if I ever voluntarily had sex with anyone I would be bound to him for life. This frightened hell out of me. I have never wanted to be anyone's possession even for a day--let alone lifelong. And I discovered that there was a basis to my fear because the first man with whom I voluntarily had sex began to harass me about ongoing commitment immediately afterward. I only wanted to escape. I discovered that women were no different. Wasn't there someone who didn't think that sex gave him ownership rights? Was my only alternative celibacy? I ought to explain that up to then I had been committing what Larry Niven calls rishathra (sex with a being of another species) with (feh) mundanes. Then I discovered fandom. There I found people who were willing to have sex on my terms and who actually knew about the idea of having non-possessive relationships. So I was no longer afraid of being swallowed up through sex after a while.

Yet there is a fear that I have never overcome. Ever since I was raped when I was nine an equation was set up in my mind. Penetration=rape. This makes me what the rapists (to use a Mary Dalyism) used to call frigid. I simply don't enjoy vaginal penetration and probably never will. So I stopped doing it. As a result, I have felt vastly relieved and free to devote myself to the sex practices that I do enjoy.

Me When I realized I had asked this question and was more or less obligated to answer it, I felt trapped -- because one of the things that scares me the most is admitting that I am scared of things! Oh, not things I can kid about like spiders, but I guess things that, socially, one is supposed to be offhand about. Well, I decided since I certainly don't expect anyone else to answer a question here unless they want to, I shouldn't expect more than that from myself either. Some of the "easy" answers then -- I feel a lot like Avedon, more things actually scare me now than did when I was a teenager, say. I trust men a lot less, for example, and distrust them in different ways. (As an editor wishing men's responses to these questions, THAT was a little scary to say, too!) Since I'm primarily heterosexual, that naturally makes sex scarier. Pushiness scares me -- it is an absolute turn-off, in fact, because all my energy is immediately diverted into repelling the social force being applied to me. Perhaps one of the interesting things about S/M is that in certain contexts (where consent is already implicit, for example -- too complicated to expound here) S/M sex simply routes around all that social pressure -- it never becomes an issue. The whole routine of ego-massage, for example, that some of us find so tedious, is entirely eliminated. A competent sadist just isn't making that kind of demand, and neither is a competent masochist, even in the "approach" stage. What luxury!



Riding the bus on home, the headphones to my pocket tape player keeping my ears warm, right foot keeping time: I'm dreaming --

*Some people like to rock, some people like to roll,
But moving and a-grooving gonna satisfy my soul*

-- dancing (suddenly, magically ABLE to dance), red dress flaring out like a hibiscus flower, graceful and wild, drunk on the music:

*I've never kissed a bear, I've never kissed a goon,
But I can shake a chicken in the middle of the room*

-- I clasp the hands of an anonymous partner, transforming the shadow into a substance I recognize, stepping out: slipping & sliding and spinning like a pinwheel, we're laughing, grinning like fools, mazed with each other. The music stops, pauses, we stand holding hands and staring at one another with these big slap-happy smiles, eyes all alight: the band strikes up again. It's slower this time, I experience a momentary twinge of disappointment, find myself tugged back onto the floor, reeled in like a yo-yo --

*When my baby loves me, when my baby hugs me,
When my baby holds me tight,*

-- We're doing a bopping tango, each cycle more abandoned than the last, closer, smiles fading away: go away (come here), pull back slow and reluctant as cold honey from a spoon --

*Man, I'm leveling, I'm in heaven
When my baby loves me right*

-- Brought back by the imperative of the dance, we hold tight to one another, hands on hips, pressing and rolling, flushed --

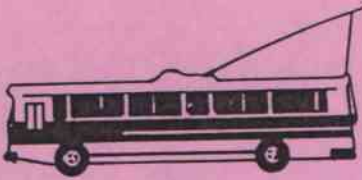
*My rock bopping baby, you ought to see him shake it,
My rock bopping baby's got tricks*

-- the dance ends, the music ends, but we won't let go. Arms around waists, trying to walk intertwined, swaying to maintain our balance and fumble footed, laughing once more, we stumble off to find some privacy, stopping now and again for gropes and kisses --

*Got no hot rod car and he can't bop
But when he starts rocking I yell "Don't stop!"*

-- flushed and hot and hilarious. Time compacts and expands to accommodate, the landscape molds itself to suit: dancing floor to room, table to big unmade bed, we let go and roll onto the sheets --

*Oh, will will will you thrill me to my fingertips,
Yum yum yum, I love your tasty lips*



The bus caromes over a pothole and I'm abruptly aware of the streets outside, the smell of the fat woman sitting next to me reading a book with a burning ship on the cover, the fact that I'm only a few blocks from my stop. Blushing and slightly shame-faced, I allow the dream to fade away, and prepare to disembark.

I do my best fantasizing on the bus, listening to my tapes and staring past the stains and scratches on the plexiglass windows: eyes stuck on the middle distance to nowhere, I can be anything, anyone, anywhen. I've ridden Man O'War on an empty track of the imagination, observed as a disembodied presence the terrible eruption of Krakatoa and the explosion of Mazuma in his epic battle with Shasta; I've overflown the City like a giant beetle in my very own rocket-propelled, electric-blue aerial car, zipping giddily around the Bay, buzzing the Golden Gate and sneering down at those poor suckers earthbound in their automobiles. Mostly, though, I've done a lot of fucking.

It used to worry me, my prediliction for sexual fantasizing on public transportation. I wondered if there were telepaths listening in on my daydreams. I'd be sitting there considering the erotic potential of garlic butter and happen to glance up, catching another passenger's eye -- *Why are they looking at me like that? Do they know what I'm thinking?* -- and dissolve into convulsions of mortified self-conciousness. I would steal another glance at the passenger I caught looking at me, expecting to see their lips silently form the words "garlic butter," one eyebrow cocked, lip curled into an expression of scornful superiority.

I was sure that there was a coven of telepaths gathering somewhere in town, snickering at me. I knew with awful certainty that my fantasies were not only unseemly but uncool, and that my choices for dream-lovers were politically incorrect. I was sure that one day a stranger would bump into me on the street and taunt me with one or another of my fantasies, hooting with derision. *Huh, don't you think of anything but sex, girl? Don't you have no taste? Why, I wouldn't take that fool on a triple-dog-dare, cash money down if I did it!*

For a time, I tried to baffle my daydreams: visualizing my thoughts as being like the layers of an onion, and trying to form a skin composed of the memory of loud music and obnoxious industrial sounds. It may have worked. Unfortunately, I was unable to maintain my train of thought and the protective skin at the same time, and I gave up in disgust. *Go ahead and listen, damn you,* I thought. *You might think my choices are bad, but it's my dream and I like it!*

It finally occurred to me that, in all likelihood, the very telepaths I feared wouldn't care a jot about what I wanted to do to whom and where. I learned to relax. I learned look forward to the time when I'd lurch to my seat, wriggle my ass into a comfortable position, cue up the music, and start a fantasy --

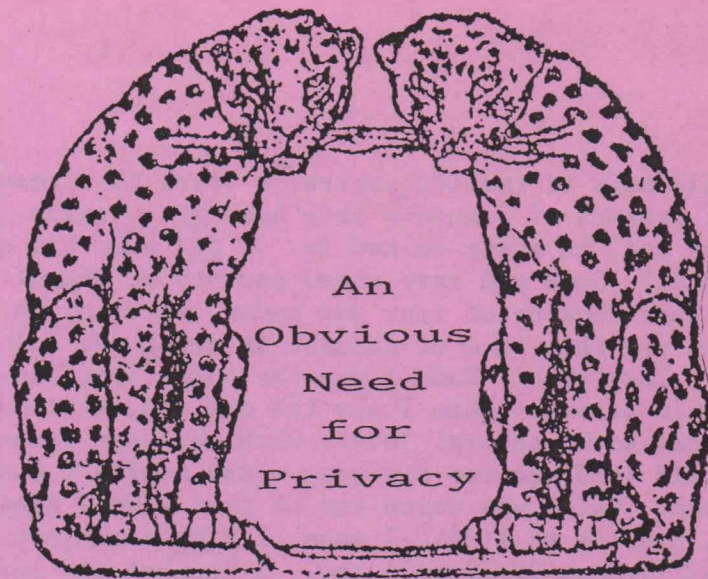
Roll me over in the clover,

-- grabbing my dream-lover's hand and pulling him down into the low herbiage: we tumble together like fox cubs, and fling our arms around each other --

Roll me over and lay me down.

CRN	Course Number	Class Title
SECRETARIAL STUDIES		
16077	SECY 9344	CLERICAL FILING
16127	SECY 9344	
16306	SECY 9344	
16211	SECY 9346	EFFECTIVE BUS COMMUNICATION
16209	SECY 9346	

FAYE
ANNE
MEYER

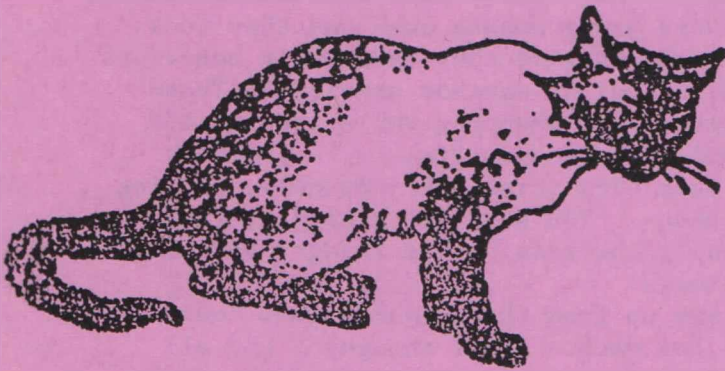


Valentine's Day just passed and the calico cat went into heat. Her suitors were many, noisy and persistent. She wasn't shy. She sat at the door to be let out (unheard-of behavior for her), and howled if I didn't notice just right now.

Behavior not unlike that of my youngest child, not easily side-tracked and intent on his investigations. This one, Sean, had his buddy Joshua over and they took themselves down to the barn. Yes, I do strongly suggest they take their behaviors I disapprove of down to the barn (or behind it, out of earshot usually). Those behaviors being things like pretending to smoke, war whooping while leaping off furniture and bad mouthing women (general and mothers specifically). I didn't die the first time these charming 3½ and 4 year olds tried out, casually, calling me a fucking bitch, I referred them to the barn. "You guys get a giggle, fine, but I don't want to have to listen. That way's the barn." Was I angry and chagrined, no, children must needs check the limits.

Back to the day I started on, the boys came up from the outyard elbow deep in brown latex caulking compound. One tube for each. And I thought I had all that stuff transferred to the basement. I hauled out rags and started the bath, wiped off the excess, stripped em down, washed off the next two layers of sludge and put their cute little buns to soak. Took a sticky armload of clothes to the laundry area and started scrubbing out goop item by item and then puttin' em in the machine to sit in detergent a while. It was such interesting work that I suddenly took note of a howling silence and quit. Hmm, time to check the younguns. Yup, awfully too quiet. I made my presence known -- stomp stomp, "What's doing, guys" -- and walked into the bathroom. I was embarrassed, and fascinated, much in the same way I reacted to graphic sex in underground comix of the early 70's. Oh, blush, do people really do that? Like that er what would it be like, I wonder, blush, but really, those women are unreal anyway, it's exaggerated (exaggerated ha, tell that down there, honey, can't think your way outa her interest heh heh) only different, I've never seen kid porn until then. And there they were, Joshua's dynamically erect penis headed right up Sean's carefully held butt. Sean with his hands on his knees and his head between them as he bent over to watch and maybe be closer to his own tumescent dick. Oh cute, they have the cutest faces. "Well," I say, "you need to wash, and quit playing around." They're just delighted with each other and clearly absorbed totally in their play. Sean began to protest cuz "We're the Brother Sharks and we swim around and we play together and this is what we do we don't wash and we live in the water and we're brothers" babble etc. while Joshua puts on his angelic cute face with those soulful big brown eyes saying "I'm so gorgeous and absolutely not responsible here and wouldn't you love one of my little million dollar smiles? Huh? Let's just forget you're upset and oh, smile a while...I can tell you don't want me to do anything but be cute, uh huh."

Meanwhile back at reality central a voice is screaming in my mind "Those two horny coot parents of Joshua's have been at it again...if not right in front of him then my god, he musta walked in. I did hear him saying, "Oh Sean you're going to like this." Good god have those parents no shame!! Oh, I know they're lusty but this, butt fucking at four and under, mercy my oh my tsk tsk" shift of gears. Hey, I know why this line of thought is doing odd things to my belly. I've heard it before. Last year. When I was the horny coot lusty licentious inappropriately sexual single parent. When I was the one who, obviously, was performing fellatio with my (they knew) several lovers with children around. Because my friends' four year old (and our two six year olds) wouldn't possibly have thought of it on their own. Which was weird cuz at that time I knew I hadn't done anything like that, kids or no kids. I mean, I KNEW it. Just like I knew Joshua's elders had been AT IT, not 30 seconds ago. I laughed and left the room to get clean dry clothes, having stayed to wash off the remaining caulk.



I was hanging out those de-gummed clothes and the calico cat swanked by to rub my ankles. Purr, roll on the fresh green grass, introduce her companions. She paced towards one and back to me, looked at the other and sashayed to him. The first one jumped her as soon as she was out of my immediate territory. He mounted her and she talked it up until he got serious whereupon she snarled and slashed at him, leaped up, looked meaningfully in my direction and stalked off into the longer grass, after the other tom and out of sight.

!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

He pressed his face close and softly licked Kirk's neck.
Kirk managed to suppress a gasp...
...Innocent, he reminded himself. Totally innocent. Vulcan, virgin, completely uninformed...Migod, if he did this to anyone else he'd get raped...or his jaw broken. Good thing I'm here.

Leslie Fish, This Deadly Innocence, or "The End of the Hurt/Comfort Syndrome"

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After issue #2 I also received a letter from Dan Kresh pondering on the question "WHY BONDAGE?" Here are some of his thoughts -- he also warns against trying these or other yoga exercises without suitable instruction and warmup.

"Most of this came to me in a flash while...I was doing two complementary positions called the Diamond and a sort of beginner's version of the Pigeon. Of the yoga positions I know, these are two of the most powerful.

"The Diamond: Put your shins on the floor, your toes pointed behind you. Putting your thumbs at right angles to your other 4 fingers, form a diamond shape between your hands. Place your palms on the floor directly in front of your knees. Place your forehead in the diamond-shaped space between your hands. To complete the position, bring your elbows to the floor.

"The Pigeon: Coming out of the Diamond, extend the left leg back. Both shins are still on the ground. The center of gravity is directly above the front of the left thigh, which is faced down. With arms pointed outwards, arch back and look into the sky. Look as far backward as possible.

"Standard sequence: Diamond, Pigeon with left leg back, Diamond, Pigeon with right leg back, Diamond.

"What does all this have to do with bondage? Plenty!

"The Diamond is the perfected image of submission and the Pigeon is the perfected image of dominance. It's not just "Oh, if I were being extremely submissive this is a position that I might go into." When I'm in the Diamond I feel the submission; when I'm in the Pigeon I am the dominance. It kicks in the chemicals in your brain which mean these states of mind.

"...if you carry back flexibility to a certain point, you find that you are manipulating the biochemical basis for power and control relationships.

"I have not done enough experimentation to be convinced yet, but I'm developing a theory as follows: "Bond"age itself, the use of ropes or constraints, actually allows one to hold yoga positions longer with less trauma to the body than without bonds, at least in some instances. Let us take a forward bend, for example. If you are holding it yourself all your vertebrae are bending forward in order to hold the position. However if you are tied into it you can relax your back, even work against the restraint, without losing the pose. Thus you can explore more fully the states of mind brought about by the back bend, with reduced wear on the body."

Interesting stuff! Dan also added much more in the interstices about health & so forth but this is the material relating to bondage. I'm not at all sure I go along with the idea that feelings of submission or dominance have a biochemical basis. They are complicated sensations and differ from person to person -- for example, I suspect I wouldn't feel particularly dominant in a backbend, though I can imagine feeling exultant. There are also strong social controls that determine what any one person will feel in response to a given stimulus. It's easy to imagine someone responding with anger and resentment to a position of supposed submission, and so on. However, I agree with your discovery about the advantages of bondage. S/M people have long known that ropes and chains can free the body to do things it cannot do on its own, especially a not terribly athletic body. Of course lots of other things are involved when it comes to sexual arousal through bondage, and being tied into certain positions (the Pigeon suggests itself immediately) could be dangerous and damaging without a lot of support. Take it a bit further: remember the muscles used when approaching orgasm and compare to what might be used in "struggling against" bondage -- also think of the breathing patterns involved. Clever, these sadomasochists...

Ask

Ms. Science:

Well, I didn't get a definitive answer to the question "How do fleas locate their prey?" It turns out this inquiry is just another example of my mind running at the forefront of scientific thought, because how fleas locate their prey is actually one of the burning issues of our time. No one knows.

Ctein informs me mosquitoes do it (locate prey, that is) by sensing carbon dioxide. Thus the simplest way to avoid mosquito bites would be just never to breathe out. This easy solution, however, won't work, because your skin also releases small amounts of CO₂. Darn.

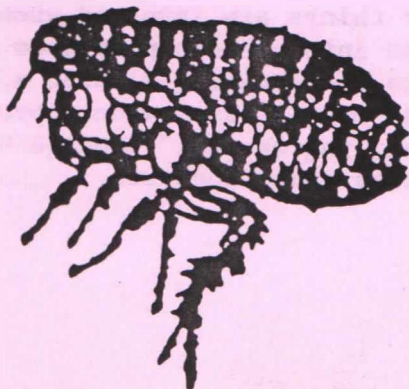
Kate Schaefer sent the clipping at right. Kate and I aren't wholly convinced. As she shrewdly pointed out, how the first flea finds its prey is not addressed by these theorists.

Several people did mention the theory that fleas don't bite people who eat brewer's yeast. Figuring the main point of this was Vitamin B, one day when the torment was at its height, with raw sores and red scars all over my legs and climbing (isn't it odd how each night they bite higher? I bet no one knows why they do that, either.) I got some balanced B complex, took a couple during the day and went to bed that night, scratching.

Next morning I woke to find a few new bites -- but, miracle of miracles -- they didn't itch! Neither did the old ones!

I realized that though B had no effect on whether fleas bite or not, it must prevent the immune system from running amok trying to repel harmless flea spit. Through experiment, I learned only balanced B (the kind with 50 of everything) had this effect.

Months later I still had faint spots where those awful bites had been, but I knew I'd contributed significantly to the sum of scientific knowledge. At least, until I went to the pharmacy counter for more B and proudly mentioned my discovery to the cashier. "Oh yes," she said, "I'm really allergic to flea bites too, and I do the same thing." Still, if this is a well-known fact, why doesn't everyone know about it, in a town as fleabitten as San Francisco? Perhaps the cashier and I are merely another instance of two brilliant independent researchers unravelling the same mystery at the same time. Perhaps we should publish a joint monograph.



MORGANTOWN, W.Va. (UPI) — How does a flea let another flea know when he's found a particularly tasty dog?

By word of mouth, so to speak, according to two West Virginia University researchers.

James Amrine, an entomologist with the WVU Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station, and Mark Jerabek, an assistant professor of electrical engineering, said in a recent research paper that fleas

may use high-frequency sound to advertise the location of a food source.

Amrine said that, as far as he knows, he and Jerabek are the only ones of among about 130 flea researchers worldwide studying that theory.

The theory resulted from Amrine's research at Iowa State University in which he used a scanning electron microscope to study the outer skeleton of the flea. Of particular interest was an area near the insect's rump known as the sensillum, which contains

sensory hairs positioned in an array similar to a radar antenna.

Amrine said he believes the hair arrangement could be used by fleas as sensitive directional receivers for high-frequency sound produced through breathing openings on their abdomens.

Jerabek is trying to devise a receiver to pick up the sound waves. If they could be reproduced, perhaps the little critters could be attracted into some sort of sticky trap, the researchers speculated.

Small talk: Fleas may communicate by high-pitched sound