

Essays About Sex

[Introduction]

I am writing a series of essays about sex.

Sex, in our culture, is often thought of as being foul, violent or otherwise subhuman. We describe it as "dirty," "nasty," and "freaky." We "bang," "nail," "smash," and "hit" each other. It's animalistic: we do it like rabbits, we do it doggy style, we might even be an animal in the bedroom.

To have sex is to lower yourself to something more primal, less evolved. A man who is often thinking about sex is a dog. A woman who has a lot of sex is a whore, or a bitch, which is also a type of dog. Discussing sex, especially our own sexuality, openly is considered inappropriate, taboo, impolite. To have or want sex is to participate in your own degradation. Perhaps it is a natural impulse, but to be civilized, to remain dignified, we must suppress it, keep that part of ourselves hidden.



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and "hit" each other.

I think there's different kinds of sin. Some things are sinful because they degrade the people around us like violence or hate, but some things are sinful because they degrade ourselves, they dull our humanity. These are sins like smoking, drinking, gambling, or watching mindless television.

Participating in these activities is victimless in the sense that they don't hurt the people around you, but they do hurt yourself. Smoking causes cancer, drinking causes liver-failure, gambling causes poverty. They are all harmful and yet we as people drink smoke and gamble.

We do it to escape ourselves. Being a human is painful. Self-awareness, self-consciousness, is generally an unpleasant experience. It's only natural to want to escape, and so we drink alcohol which makes us stupider, or we watch mindless television to distract ourselves from the realities of life.

My friend converted to Catholicism and quit smoking because it's sinful. He



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tells me that smoking is enjoyable only if he doesn't think about it. If he really pays conscious attention to what he's doing he finds it disgusting.

Sex can feel very mindless. It's similar to watching TV in this way. If I'm having sex I often am not thinking about what I'm doing, or who I am, or my day-to-day life. I can become so overwhelmed with the experience that I lose a sense of control over my own body. Sex with someone else can blur the line between myself and my partner. Like my self-delineation becomes less clear.

But not all activities that we can lose ourselves in are sinful. Some are dignified, elevated, not subhuman but superhuman.

People can lose themselves in the activity of music making. People can lose themselves in playing sports, or dancing, or throwing pottery. I love making typefaces, and often hours of the day disappear in the blink of an



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eye because I'm so absorbed in the work. These aren't subhuman, animalistic activities, they are the things that make us human. Art, and music, and good food, and captivating storytellers. These are the parts of life that make living joyful. They are expressions of our humanity. They connect us.

I found videos of a very skilled tailor on YouTube making suits. He is so laser-focused on his work, it's like the thread and needle become extensions of his own body. Watching him sew is captivating, it makes the hair on my neck stand up. I feel similarly when I watch someone paint or play music.

There is something divine about the capacity to create. Humans are able to shape and change and sculpt the world in their image. They can leave behind art or writing that connects with people thousands of years in the future. God created the heavens and the earth and humans harness the godly



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sprit within them to create poetry,
song, and dance.

Sex between two people is a
fundamentally creative act. Our bodies
on their own are sexless. We generate
eroticism with how we move and touch
and think. Sex is collaborative, we
make it with each other. Sex is
vulnerable, and sex helps connect us,
form bonds to each other.

Our sex drive is rooted in the same
human impulse that motivates us to
make art. The divine, creative energy
that makes us human. Sex, like art,
connects us to each other, it connects
us to ourselves.

To observe that people lose themselves
in sex and imagine that it is
therefore a sinful act, is to
misinterpret the nature of sex. No
body loses themselves while playing
the piano because playing the piano is
such a brainless activity. They lose
themselves in it because it's divine.



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It's true that animals hump each other. It's true that a dog would probably enjoy a Michelin star meal. Dogs also eat their own vomit and hump backpacks. If humans can cook and eat food in a way that's evolved and civilized maybe they can do so with sex as well.

There's a lot of shame surrounding sex in our culture. It discourages us from thinking and talking about sex. It pressures us to compartmentalize that part of ourselves. To shove our sexuality into the closet and never let it out.

But if we have sexual desire, then I don't think it's healthy or even possible to eradicate it. And by never letting it out on purpose we force it to come out in ways that are against our will. It spills out of us in inappropriate moments. Our horniness builds until it's powerful enough to take charge and make us do things we will regret in the morning. Our efforts to suppress our sexuality

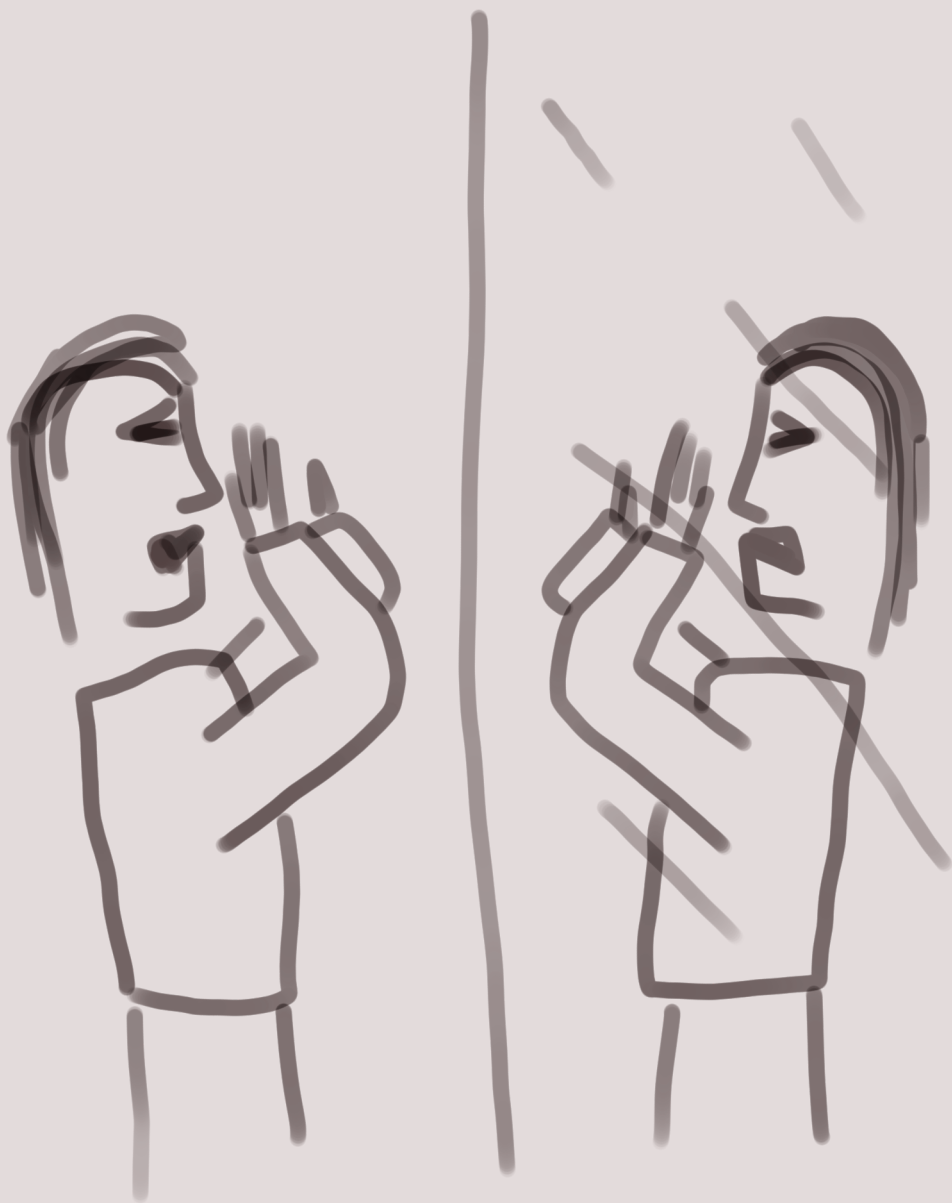


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makes it less controllable, and gives credence to its sinful nature.

For most of my life I feared thinking about my own sexuality. I saw my sex-drive as a weakness. A fault of mine. I felt ashamed of myself if I was ever sexually attracted to someone. I loathed seeing my face reflected in the blackness of my computer screen while I was watching porn. I was ashamed of what I was doing and cowered away from self-reflection. I worried that if I started paying attention to my sexuality I would discover the whole thing is bad and wrong and I would have to try and destroy it. I don't think I'm strong enough to destroy something like that so I would just have to live with the knowledge of my own sinful nature.

But the more I interrogated my own sexuality, and the more I engaged with it intentionally and consciously, the less scary and powerful it became. I realized my horniness is rooted in love and a desire for human connection. I found it easier to let



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go of the parts of my sexuality that are broken or problematic. I discovered ways of having sex that when I paid attention to what I was doing and thought about it consciously it became more pleasurable, more sexy, instead of destroying the thing that made it hot.

I have a lot of faith in the beauty of sex. To me its beautiful no matter how gross or tragic or pointless people's motivation to have sex is, no matter how unattractive people's bodies or grunts are, and no matter how weird or deviant the type of sex. As long as the people having sex want to be having sex there is something divine and beautiful about their sex. There is no amount of defilement, blaspheme, or perversion that kill that beauty.

I want to start talking about sex because I want to encourage people to think about their own sexuality. The more conversations we have around sex, the less shameful it will become, and the more barriers to sexual liberation will be removed. As scary as it feels,



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I don't think engaging with or thinking about our sexuality will ever lead to us discovering that it is fundamentally ugly. On the contrary I think it will lead us to discover it's fundamentally beautiful.

I am writing a series of essays about sex. Most of the time when people write essays they do so with the desire to persuade. They will cite facts and logic and statistics and structure their arguments with the goal of making them strong and hard to argue against. That is not my goal.

I tried writing about sex with this goal in mind, and I quickly realized my own beliefs are not logical. I think things that are self-contradictory, irrational, and silly. There is no way I can argue for all my beliefs without undermining myself.

So I gave up writing with the goal of persuasion. Instead, what I am attempting to do is reflect on my feelings and attitudes about sex and our culture and present them as

WHY IM RIGHT

$$2+2=4$$

see earth = round

(a) ~~fee~~ = tea



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honestly as I can. I have found that when other people talk about their messy thoughts and feelings, I sometimes recognize myself in them. It gives me language to describe and understand my experience of the world. Self-knowledge is the first step to empowerment.

I don't agree with everything that I think. Sometimes I think a woman doesn't really love me unless she agrees to have sex with me. That's obviously silly, but that belief still exists within me, and it still impacts how I experience and navigate the world. I think there's utility to describing that belief and discussing it publicly, because if I understand that I feel that I can be intentional with how I navigate that belief.

My perspective on the world is very much tied up with my identity, upbringing, and experiences: things that are not shared by everyone. If I make arguments in my essays that don't feel true or convincing to you, feel free to dismiss them. Hopefully they



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inspire you to think about your own perspective on the world. Perhaps write essays of your own.

I am writing a series of essays about sex, and I want you to know that no matter how ugly the things I describe, and no matter how cynical my attitude is, I do think sex is fundamentally beautiful, and I have a great deal of faith in the project of sexual empowerment. I believe no matter who you are or how your sexuality manifests, that you are beautiful. I believe if you have a sexuality that there is something divine in you and that the project of liberation will make that beauty and divinity stronger and more pronounced.

It is with this goal that I write my essays about sex.



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