

'On Sex' series (6/6):

Celibacy and Abstinence

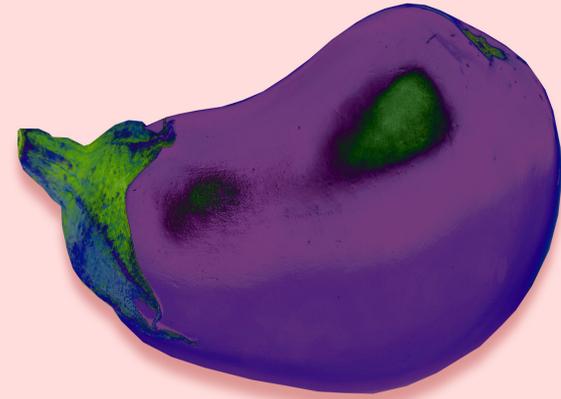


“Abstinence”

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& Professor of History at Birkbeck, University of London**

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Is sex a 'good thing'?



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‘On Sex’ series:

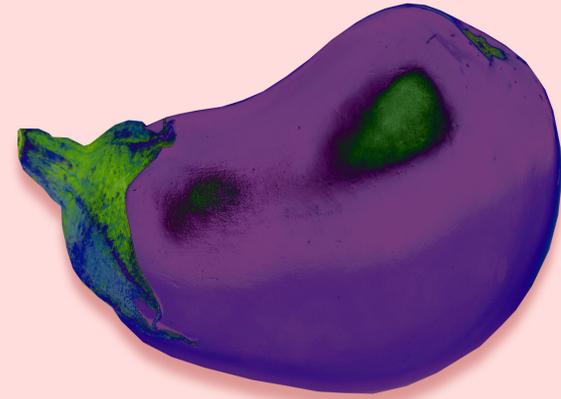
Pleasure

Perversion

Pornography

Sex work

Monogamy



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‘Bad sex’

‘Good sex’

‘Heteronormativity’

‘Compulsory heterosexuality’

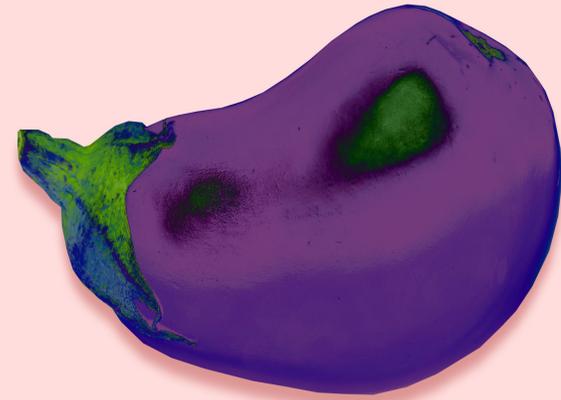


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The single most reckless
'error' in my series of
lectures:
my underlying assumption
that
sex is a (very) good thing

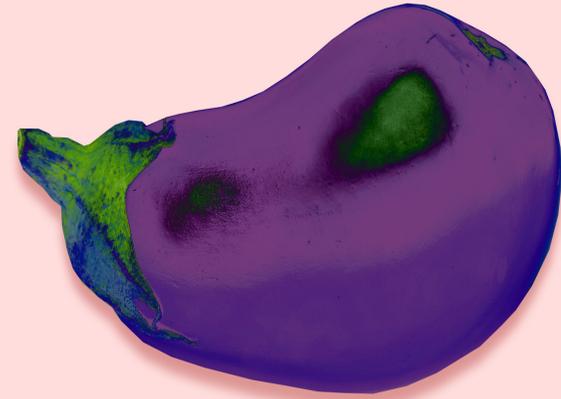


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I will be critiquing
my own
pro-sex position



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‘We don’t *have* bodies;
we *are* bodies’.

And our bodies
are never ours alone.



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Victorian spinsters as wizened
hysterics or compulsive animal-
lovers



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Victorian men being 'priced out' of
the 'marriage market'



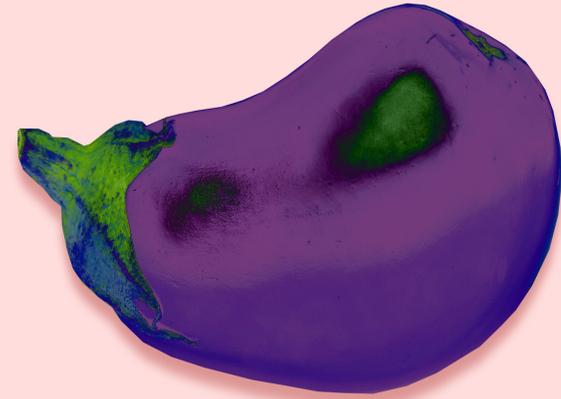
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Dangers of enforced celibacy in
prison (‘conjugal visitation rights’)



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Dangers of clerical celibacy



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Incels
or
Involuntary Celibates

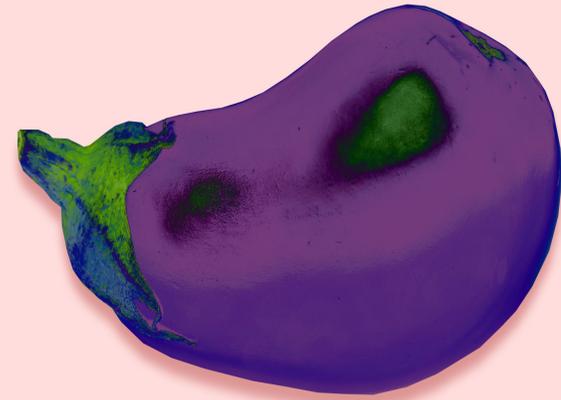


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Men's entitlement to women's bodies



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The Matrix (1999);
'blue or red pill'?

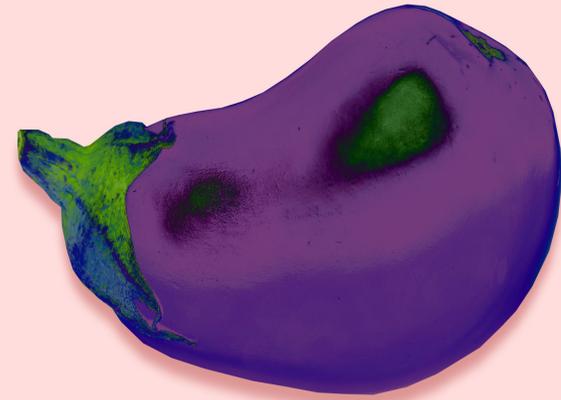


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Abstinence movement in the U.S.



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Phyllis Schlafly of the Eagle Forum



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1980s: 1 in 50 teachers taught
abstinence-only education;

1999: 1 in 4



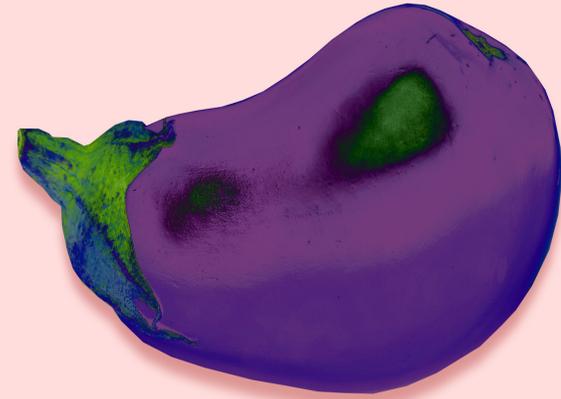
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Harms of sex outside of
monogamous marriage:

social, economic,
psychological, health



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Educational video

‘No Second Chance’:

11-13-year-old boy: ‘What if I have sex outside of marriage?’

Teacher: ‘Well, I guess you’ll just have to be prepared to die. And you’ll probably take with you your spouse and one or more of your children’.



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2013: 1 in every 8 American girls
and young women had taken a
pledge of abstinence



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‘Single moms’

‘Welfarism’

‘Hypersexual’ BME teenagers

Classist exploitation & racism



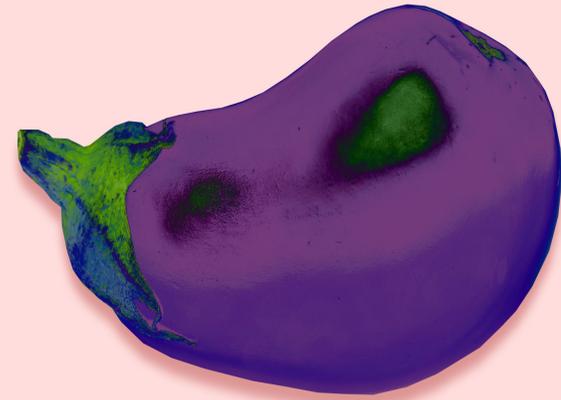
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Congressional investigation:

80% of the abstinence programmes
'use factually incorrect curriculum
or teach distorted information
about reproductive health'

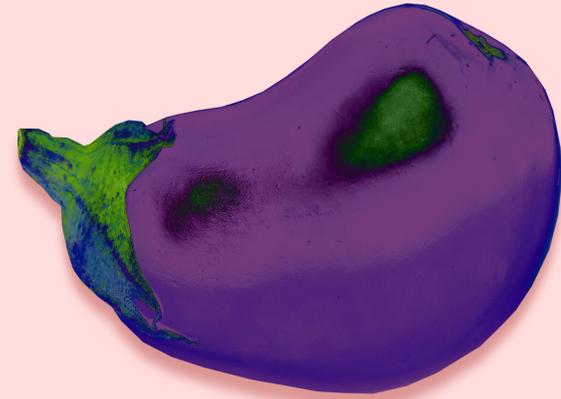


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Shakers
Koreshans
Sanctificationists



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Asexuals:
compulsory sexuality



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Anthony Bogaert:

Unlike celibacy, which is a choice,
asexuality is a sexual orientation



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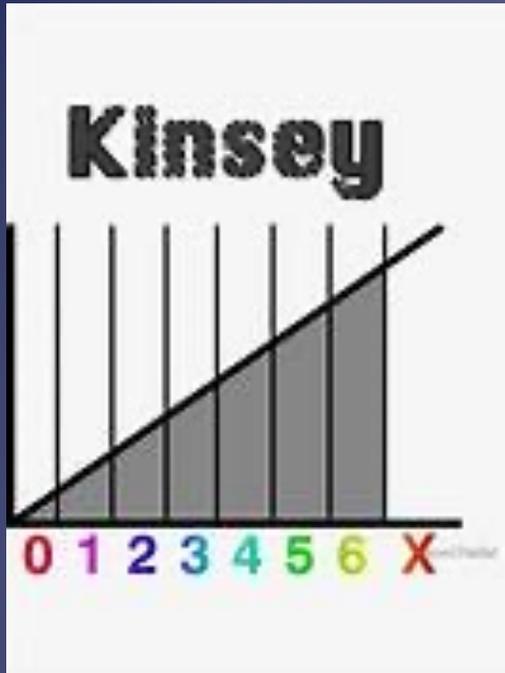
Richard von Krafft-Ebing's
Psychopathia Sexualis
(1886)



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Alfred Kinsey's 'Scale'



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Alfred Kinsey:

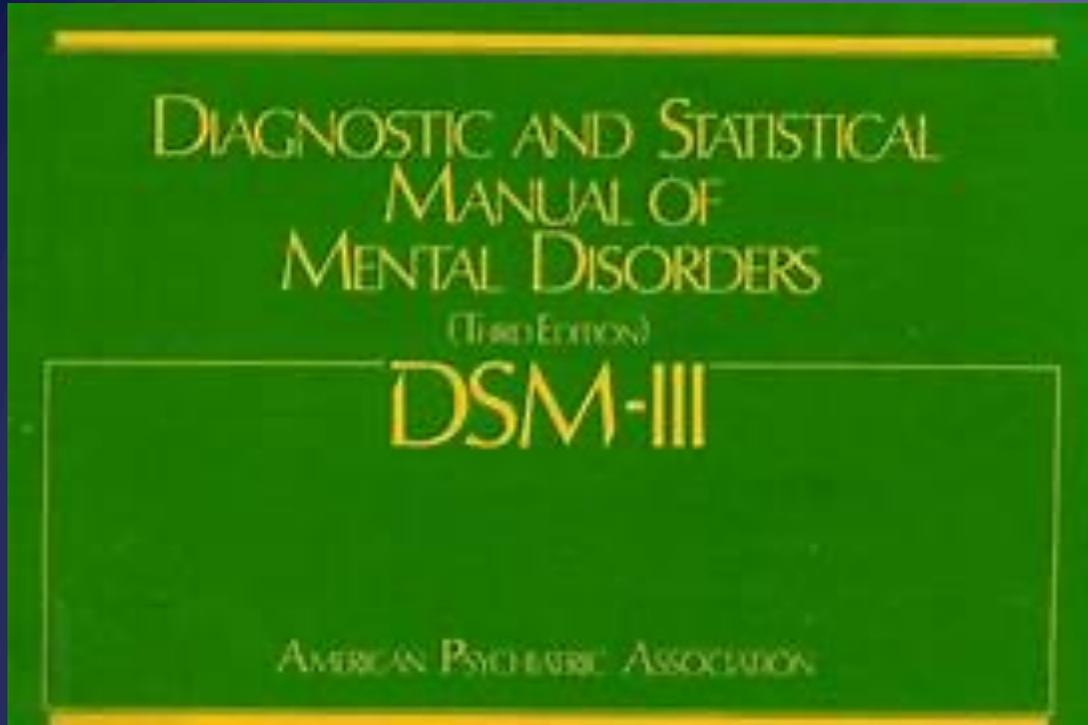
14-19% of unmarried
women are asexuals



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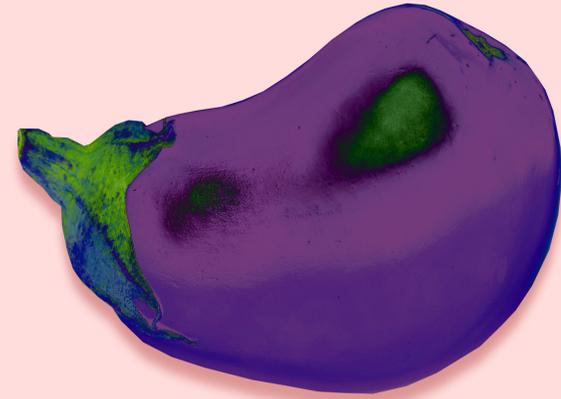
DSM (1980-1987):

shift from

Inhibited Sexual Desire Disorder

to

Hypoactive Sexual Desire Disorder



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Unwanted
but consensual
sexual intercourse



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‘Big Pharm’

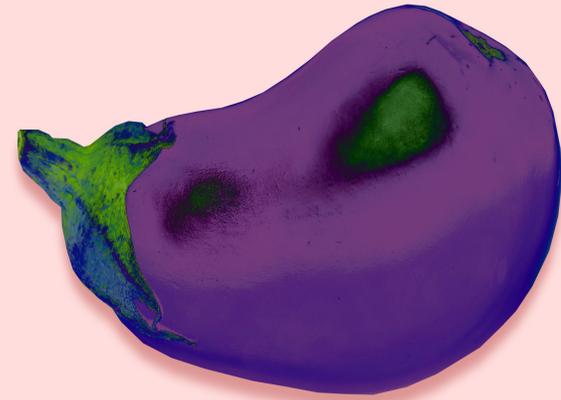


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‘Age-old angst over
women’s sexuality
overlaid by the
commodification of
sexuality’

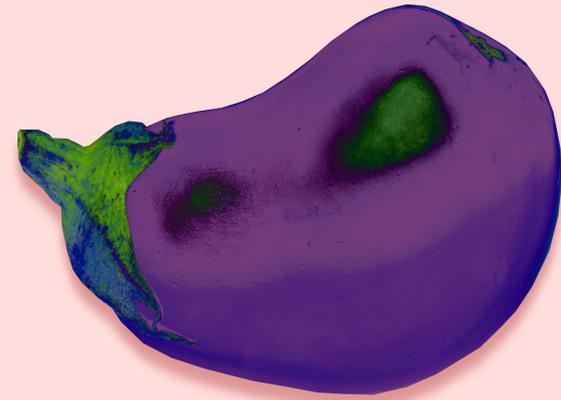


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Asexuals face *more*
discrimination than
homosexuals and
bisexuals



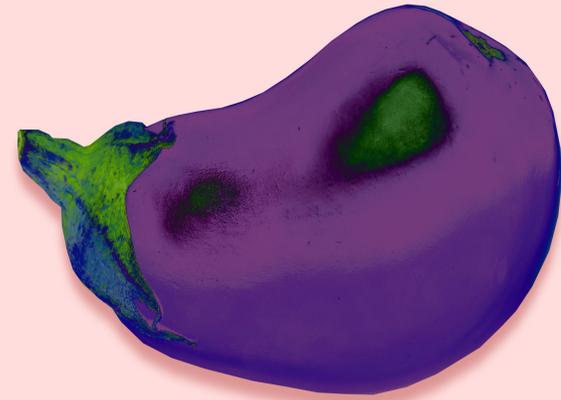
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Dan Savage:

‘if you are presenting yourself as a carbon-based life form, a vertebrate, because almost all humans are, you have an obligation to disclose that you are actually a jellyfish’



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Haven for the Human Amoeba

Asexual Visibility and Education Network

The Official Asexual Society

The Official Nonlibedoism Society



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What is sex?

Is 'asexuality' a sexuality?

Is adding an 'A' to LGBTQ
essentialist?

Is it another example of
compulsory sexuality?



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Does it:

- 1) shore up the idea that heterosexuality is the ‘norm’?
- 2) contribute to the belief that sexuality is normal?
- 3) disallow asexual ways of achieving intimacy?



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Adrienne Rich's

'compulsory heterosexuality'

Judith Butler's

'heterosexual matrix'

The 'coital imperative'

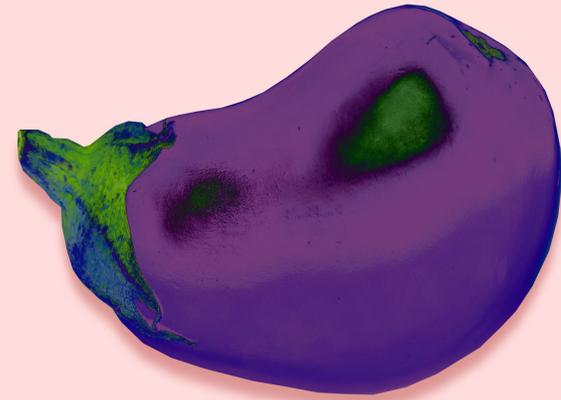


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Asexuals trouble my pro-sex
position by undermining the
pro/anti sex divide & suggesting
alternative ways of 'bodying forth'



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Celibacy and Abstinence

But please come to my NEXT series on the
Cultural History of Diseases.

And many thanks for all the inspiration and
ideas you have given me.



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