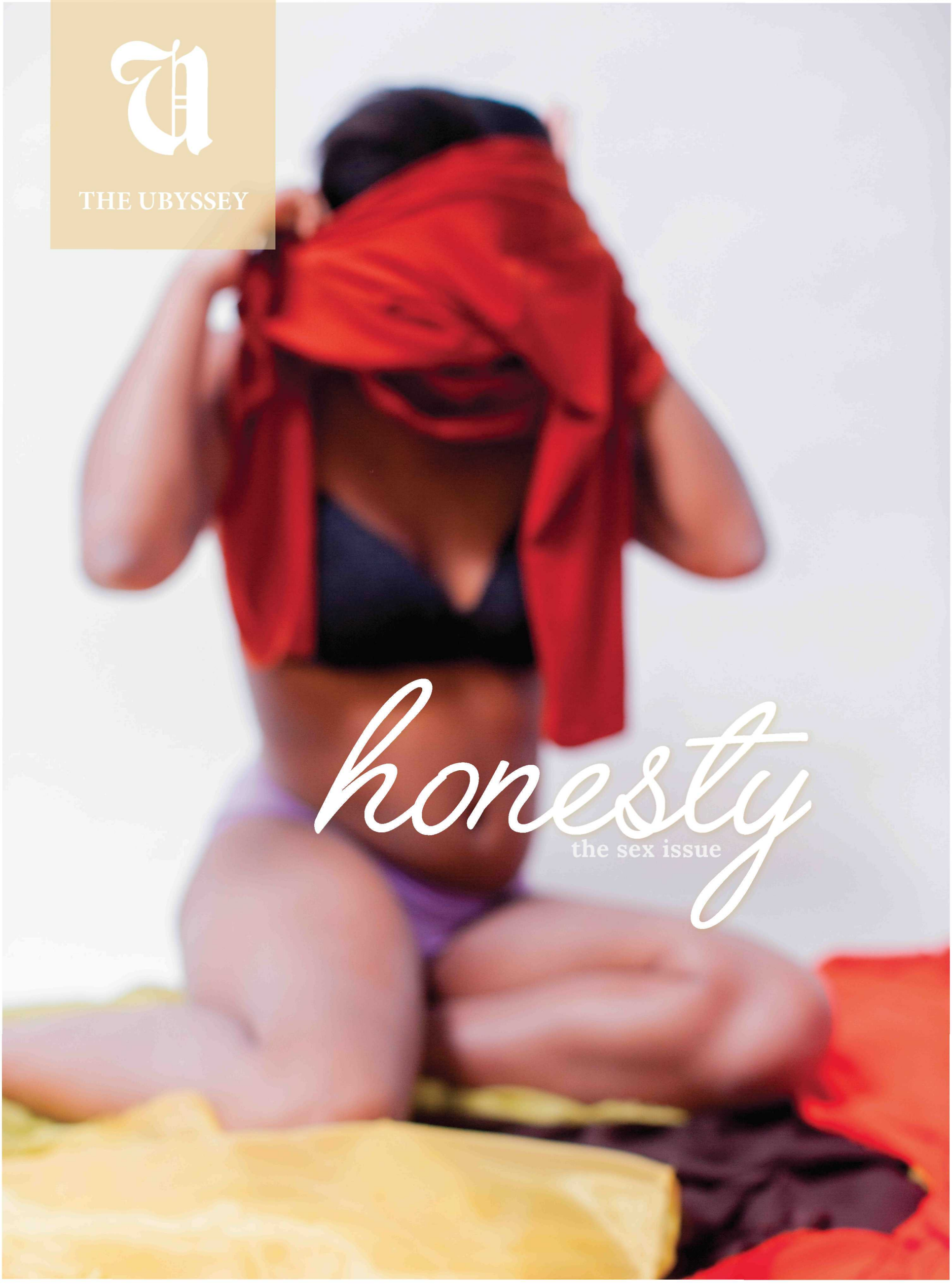
FEBRUARY 14, 2018 | VOLUME XCIX | ISSUE XXIV
MODERN RENAISSANCE SINCE 1918

THE UBYSSEY



honesty

the sex issue

the ubyssey

FEBRUARY 14, 2018
VOLUME XCIX
ISSUE XXIV

EDITORIAL

Coordinating Editor
Jack Hauen
coordinating@ubyssey.ca

Design Editor
Natalie Morris
printeditor@ubyssey.ca

News Editors
Samantha McCabe & Alex Nguyen
news@ubyssey.ca

Culture Editor
Samuel Du Bois
culture@ubyssey.ca

Sports + Rec Editor
Lucy Fox
sports@ubyssey.ca

Video Producer
Kate Colenbrander
video@ubyssey.ca

Opinion + Blog Editor
Emma Hicks
opinion@ubyssey.ca

Science Editor
Nivretta Thatra
science@ubyssey.ca

Photo Editor
Partick Gillin
photos@ubyssey.ca

Features Editor
Moira Wyton
features@ubyssey.ca

STAFF

Sophie Sutcliffe, Joshua Azizi, Jack Lamming, Tristan Wheeler, Zubair Hirji, Zak Vescara, Charlotte Beaulieu, Iyanu Owolabi, Clare Skillman, Olamide Olaniyan, Negin Nia, Salomon Micko Benrimoh, Samantha Searle, Kristine Ho, Bill Situ, Divija Madhani, Lawrence Ge, Veronica Ciastko, Danielle Olusanya, Liz Wang, Ryan Neale, Mitchell Ballachay, Shelby Rogers, James Vogl, Aziz Soriawa, Jordan Byrum, Lua Presidio, Aiken Lao, Emma Livingstone, Claire Lloyd, Ashley Dhanda, Saman Shariati, Tiffany Ou, Joseph Kennel, Andrea Garza, Sarah Neubauer, Thea Udwadia, Ryan Patrick Jones, Jacob White, Patrick Hatch, Grace Young, Allison Gacad, Alison Knill, Emma Ng, Novera Sayed, Jenny Xu, Koby Michaels, Aidan Tong, Bridget Chase, Henry Anderson, Gabriel Robinson-Leith, Julia Burnham, Scott Young

BUSINESS

Business Manager
Ron Gorodetsky
business@ubyssey.ca

Account Manager
Adam McQueen
adam@ubyssey.ca

Senior Web Developer
Peter Siemens
peter@ubyssey.ca

Web Developer
Atsushi Yamamoto
atsushi@ubyssey.ca

President
Sebastian Miskovic
president@ubyssey.ca

CONTACT

Editorial Office:
SUB 2208
604.283.2023

Business Office:
SUB 2209
604.283.2024

The New Student Union Building
6133 University Boulevard
Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z1

Online: ubyssey.ca
Twitter: @ubyssey
Snapchat: theubyssey

LEGAL

The Ubyssey is the official student newspaper of the University of British Columbia. It is published every Tuesday by The Ubyssey Publications Society. We are an autonomous, democratically run student organization and all students are encouraged to participate.

Editorials are chosen and written by the Ubyssey staff. They are the expressed opinion of the staff, and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Ubyssey Publications Society or the University of British Columbia. All editorial content appearing in The Ubyssey is the property of The Ubyssey Publications Society. Stories, opinions, photographs and artwork contained herein cannot be reproduced without the expressed, written permission of The Ubyssey Publications Society.

The Ubyssey is a founding member of Canadian University Press (CUP) and adheres to CUP's guiding principles.

The Ubyssey accepts opinion articles on any topic related to the University of British Columbia (UBC) and/or topics relevant to students attending UBC. Submissions must be written by UBC students, professors, alumni, or those in a suitable position (as determined by the opinions editor) to speak on UBC-related matters. Submissions must not contain racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, harassment or discrimination. Authors and/or submissions will not be precluded from publication based solely on association with particular ideologies or subject matter that some may find objectionable. Approval for publication is, however, dependent on the quality of the argument and The Ubyssey editorial board's judgment of appropriate content. Submissions may be sent by email to opinion@ubyssey.ca. Please include your student number or other proof of identification. Anonymous submissions will be accepted on extremely rare occasions. Requests for anonymity will be granted upon agreement from four fifths of the editorial board. Full opinions policy may be found at ubyssey.ca/submit-an-opinion

It is agreed by all persons placing display or classified advertising that if the Ubyssey Publications Society fails to publish an advertisement or if an error in the ad occurs the liability of the UPS will not be greater than the price paid for the ad. The UPS shall not be responsible for slight changes or typographical errors that do not lessen the value or the impact of the ads.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

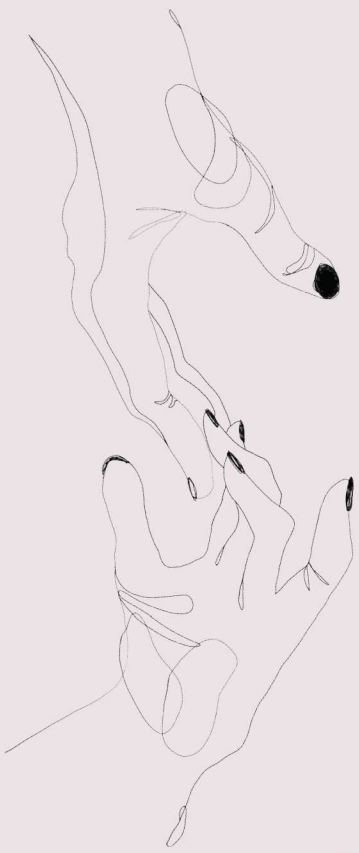
We would like to acknowledge that this paper and the land on which we study and work is the traditional, occupied, unceded territory of the Coast Salish peoples, including the territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), Stó:lō and Səl̓ilwətaɬ/Sel̓ilwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

editor's note

Honesty is something we all want to embody. But whether it be with our family, friends, loved ones or otherwise, putting it into practice is a whole other story. By embracing honesty as the theme for this year's sex issue, we hoped to pick apart those stories and capture how immensely difficult it can be to incorporate the concept into our lives.

This year's submissions, as with last year's, did not disappoint. Whether it be physical, romantic, personal or interpersonal, the amount of students who opened up about their experiences humbled and excited us. There's something special about getting insight into someone else's life. It's especially lovely when that person may be a stranger, yet you relate to their story in such an intimate way.

We're all just trying to figure it out. And with these 20 laborious pages, I hope that you find something familiar and something new, from snippets on romps in washrooms to love letters to our own bodies. What we've put down on paper is more than words – it's an embodiment of love, sex and honesty.



A huge thank you goes out to the incredible team members behind this project: Natalie Morris, Kate Colenbrander, Patrick Gillin, and Nivretta Thatra, as well as the entire *Ubyssey* editorial board and staff. Without your love and passion, this issue would not be what it is – and, in our opinion, it's pretty great.

So open these pages and read our love letter to you, UBC.

Samantha McCabe,
News Editor

Photos by
Kate Colenbrander & Samantha McCabe

Art by **Aiken Lao**
Design by **Natalie Morris**

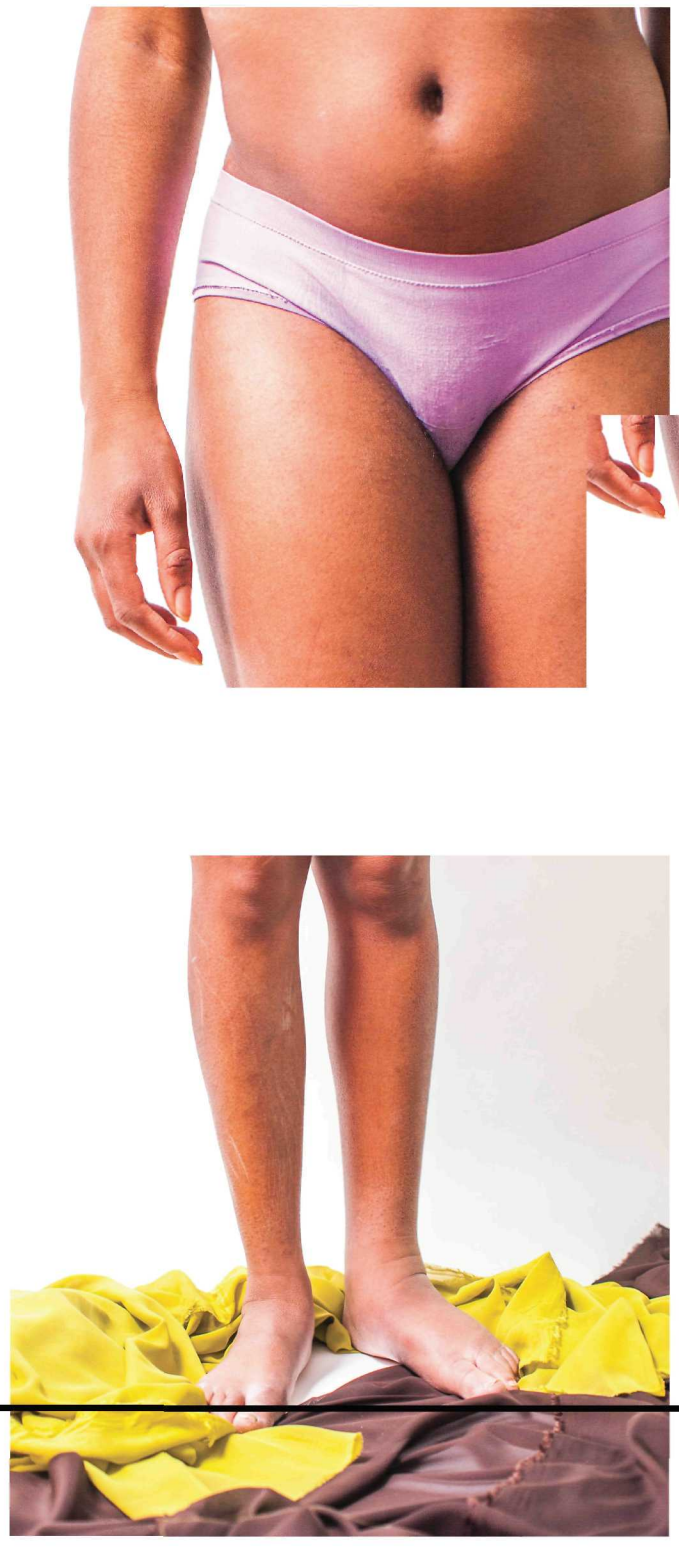


table of contents

mini essays 04
personal essays 06
soapbox 14
unsolicited advice 16
resources 18

Starstuff

Helen Zhou

On a quiet summer night, I fucked a stranger who called me Tinkerbell. He was very, very tall and talked in a low, simple manner that made you think he was dumber than he probably was.

We sat on the couch sipping Barefoot merlot, where he slung his long arm behind me. We talked about ourselves and our lives. I told him we weren't going to have sex.

We got high. The joint between my fingers, I held it to his mouth as he breathed in. His face was close to mine and I sensed he was going to kiss me. I stuck the joint in between my lips and turned away slightly.

"I'm trying to smoke here," I said. He laughed softly, demurred. When the sky started moving faster and time slowed down, we made our way back to my dorm.

He lay down on my bed first and gestured for me to join him. I lay down with my back against his hard body and asked him if he ever thought about how vast outer space was. His fingers along my rib cage felt musical. I didn't protest when he started kissing the back of my neck and his hands began drifting up my dress.

Against my own word, we had sex. It was fun until it wasn't, and despite being filled, I never felt emptier. The next day, he texted me, "Hi Tinkerbell. Did you have fun the other night?" And when I didn't text back 50 minutes later, he added, "Guess not."

We could be anyone

Samantha

Honey drips down my fingers and he laps it up. It runs into my hair and sticks; he says he likes the tackiness, uses it to knot his hands in there, some attempted personification of permanence. It's just the first touch, but we already know this won't last forever.

I watch a rosewater flush wash across his cheeks, exertion in its finest form. He holds me up to the light, turns me over and makes the shadows pour out of me.

Maybe we carve out little nooks of detached comfort in the shoulders of those we know, of those we think we aren't at risk of falling for. We drive pickaxes into the polished incline of emotions and don't look down. Only the brave and the terribly naïve are at the bottom. Do we hear their cries for help, or are we imagining them?

Sometimes, when I'm alone in the silence of clean sheets and a moonlit room, I press my hand to my chest and imagine that I'm feeling someone else's heartbeat. And then I roll over, exalt in the roominess of a single occupancy, swirl myself until the covers are so tight that they feel like an embrace. I want arm's length cool tones and I want face-buried-in-chest warmth. I want limbs laced perfectly together and my own careless sprawl.

I want the taste of honey, and I want you, and I want him, and I don't want anyone, and I could be anyone, and so could you.

But everyone who has called me beautiful has left and not come back

Emma Hicks

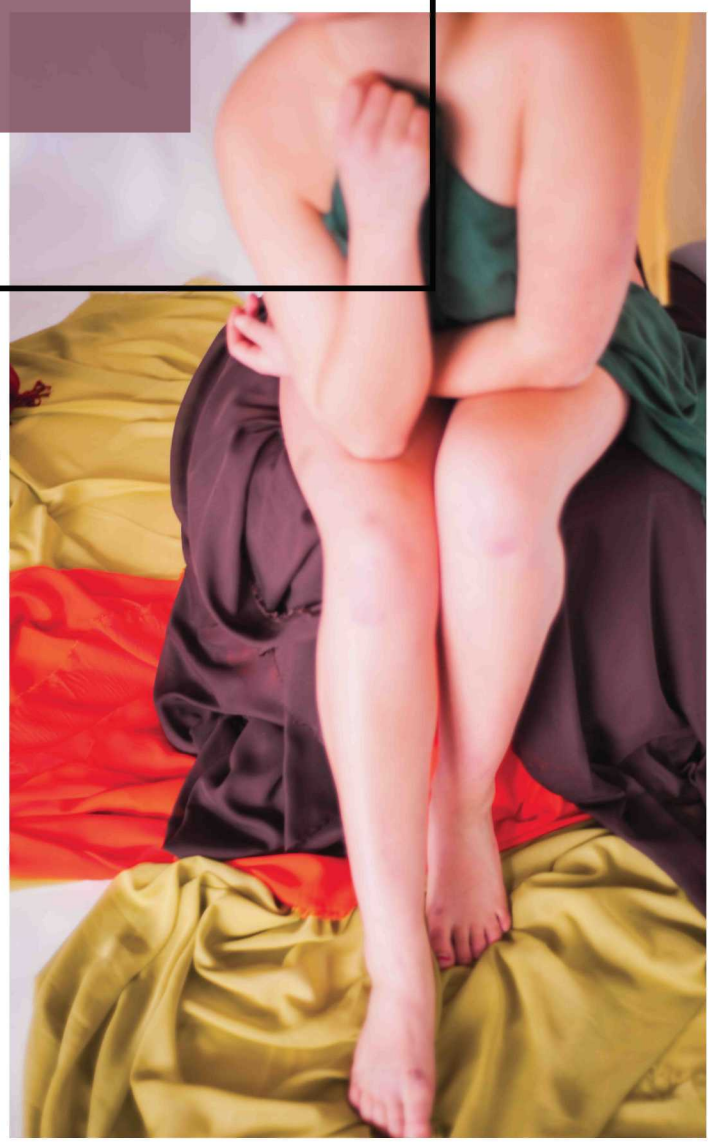
I grew up in a family of all girls
who prioritized being thin and pretty
and when a hair fell out of place, our dad would tuck it behind our ears
and when the belts around our waists loosened our mom would ask why and say
it's not okay to be okay. It's okay to be the best.

But in a family of all girls you can't always be the best
so I found what I was good at,
which was counting my ribs and the knobs in my spine,
and I would stand naked in front of my mirror and trace the grooves
up and down until I could slide my fingers in between them.

I did the same with my hipbones, watching them widen as I grew,
keeping them prominent so they were visible
through my jeans and it wasn't till I was eighteen
and someone asked me if I was okay
that I realized I might not be.

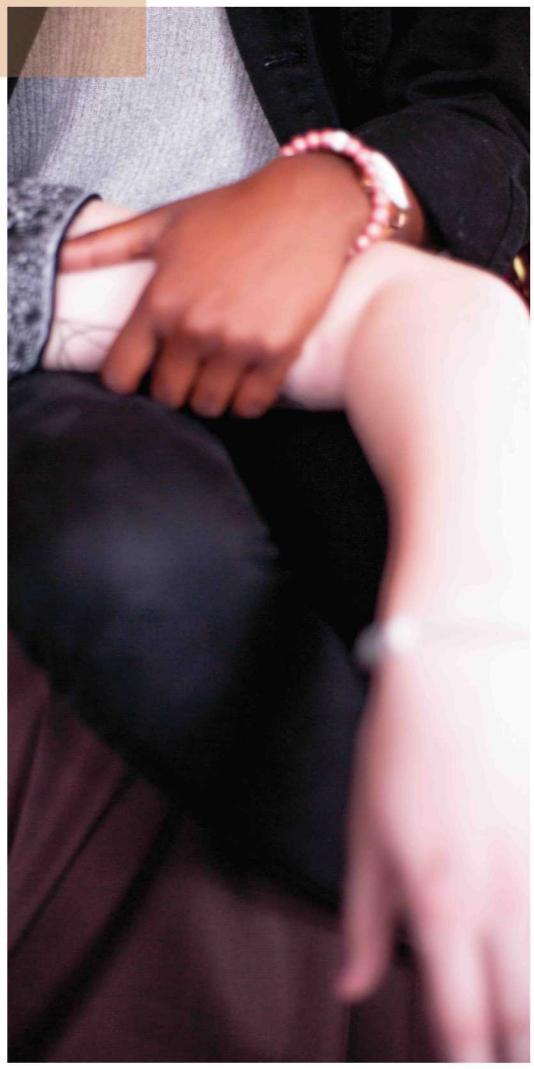
And every person who I let inside
would tell me that I was beautiful
so I never changed, except to try harder and be better
and be the best so I could please them,
and please them I did.

But I found myself alone,
counting, like I've done since I was eleven,
feeling the familiar bumps and the smooth scars that coat my skin,
so I tuck my hair behind my ears and tighten my belt around my waist
and tell myself every thing will be okay, even if I'm not.



To connect

Rosemary Xinhe



How do we sometimes fall so, so quick?

There was someone, from early August, in 大连. We met at a bank – me, taking out money from the account my parents had set aside for me in China, and him, depositing money he had made from his work at the naval base.

We had just under two weeks together. Little fractures of every other day were spent together by the sea or by the square or buying groceries. After all, he was there for his military training for the Benin army, and I was there to care for Grandma. One of our last conversations centered around how people would exit the elevator when they saw the colour of his skin as he stepped on.

A man yelled at us on one of our last walks together. He was shouting at me for holding hands on the street with a man with the softest, most electrifying skin I had ever touched.

And then there is the man who always seems to be in a different city. We do similar research on Indigenous language preservation, though he is eons ahead of me in intellect and academic accomplishments; he just finished submitting applications for his PhD.

The curls on his head are sometimes loud, but he is a quiet man. I don't know why he is so generous in allowing me to frantically fill up our silences.

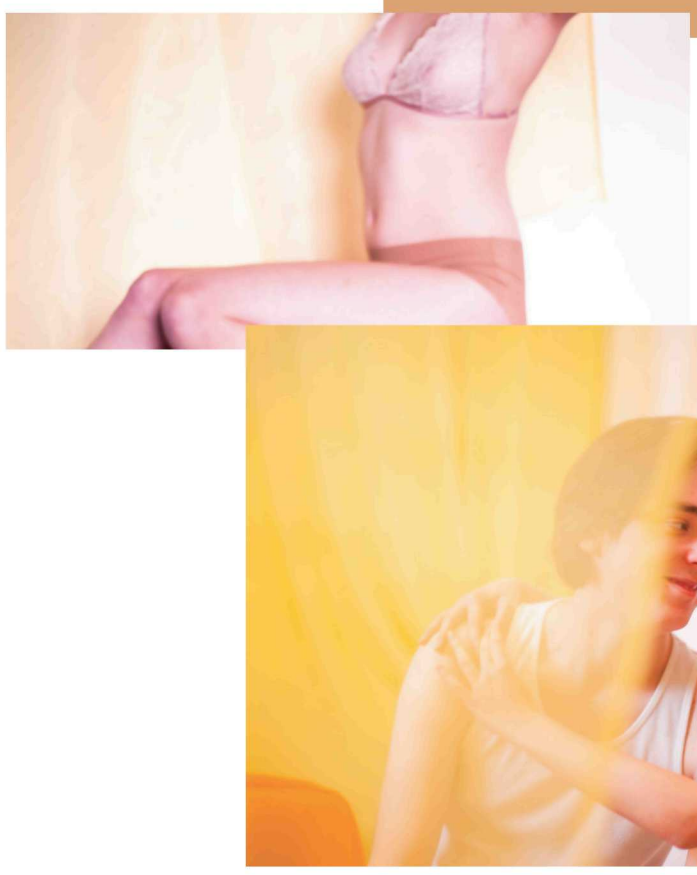
The geographical spaces that separate our physical bodies are made up in part by exchanges of pieces of poetry and photographs and check-ins on what the other person ate for dinner and "are you sleeping okay?"

And then there is the stubborn and stubbly boy from Stuttgart two summers ago. The language barrier proved to be evident as he took a hairdryer out of the bathroom cabinet when I asked for a hair elastic. It was a deeply intense and therefore sometimes unstable-feeling kind of closeness, the closeness with that boy with a last name too long for me to hold with even both of my hands.

What does this all mean? I have moved past kicking myself for falling for people too quickly. I think it is just a foundational part of who I am. I have decided it is okay to have bits of my too-big heart in different corners of this world. I think we all do.

A timeline of love and recovery

Jess Mackie



He and I are in his bed on our third date and we're about to make love.

We haven't yet. I wanted to take it slower, and not rush into drunken, fumbling sex like I had with the boys who left me empty. This boy I'll be in love with. It's inevitable. When I was sixteen I thought I was, mistaking a consuming crush for it. Around that time he graduated from high school, moved away and left me indulgent in my heartache.

Only a year went by before he came back.

He had cancer – a kind of brain tumour children get. In the year he underwent surgery and chemo I visited him twice. We watched *Bonnie and Clyde* and took walks and smoked weed.

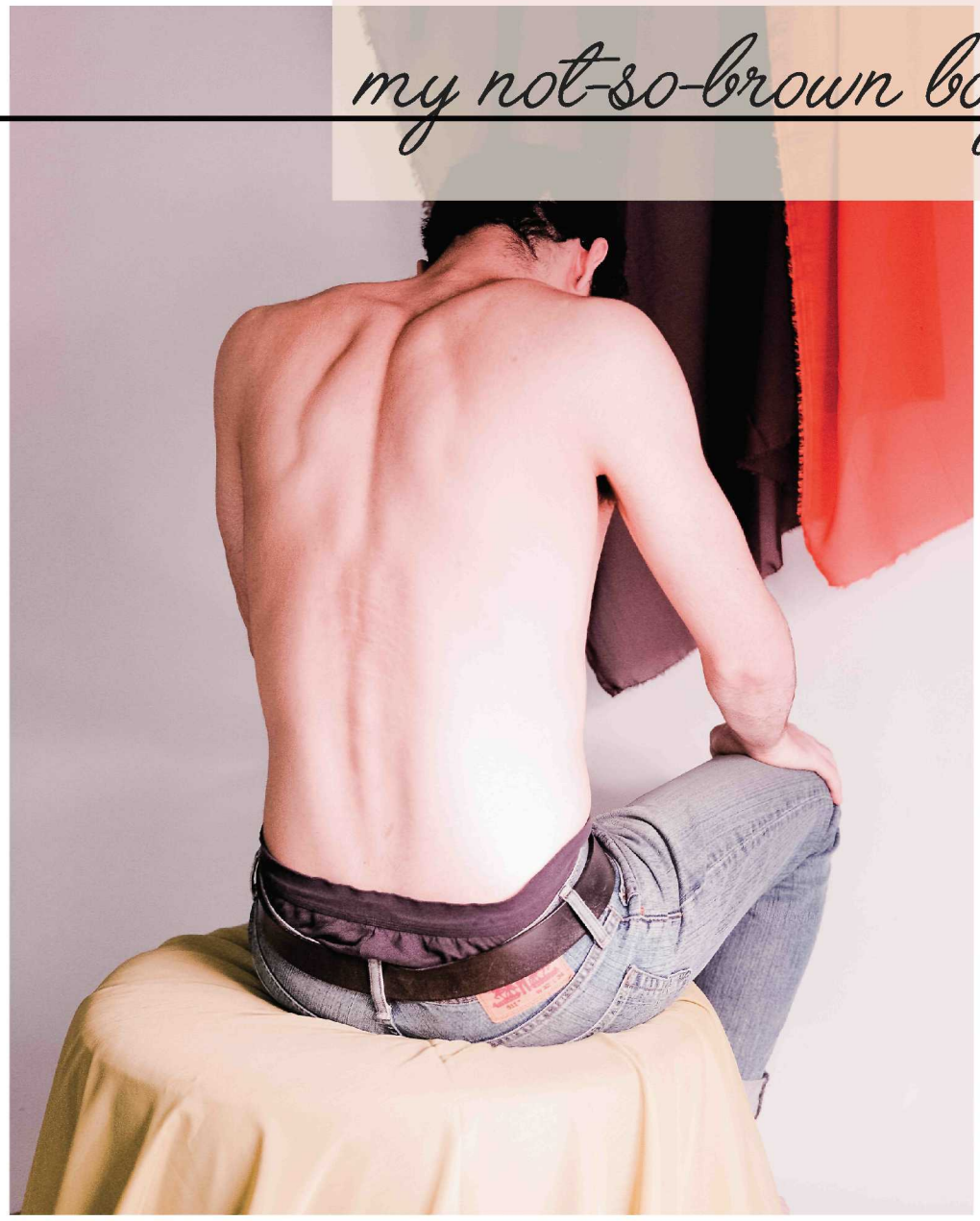
After that I didn't see him until three years later, when we found ourselves together in a college statistics course. By that time I had been with other people, had fallen in and out of love, but he hadn't fully recovered from his illness – his cancer was gone, but depression and exhaustion remained. We sat together in class, but were distant. A year and a half passed without contact. Then, down a hall I walked every day, I saw him coming towards me, and at last, we connected.

Now, here we are: on our third date about to make love for the first time. It's then that he tells me he hasn't been with anyone since he was sick. His cerebellum had the tumour and now his balance is off and he's worried we won't be able to do it as he wants to. He tells me this as I rub his head, feeling the place where the surgeon cut into it. We make love that night and it's bad – clumsy. It takes time for us to get anywhere satisfying. We find it's best with me on top, so he doesn't get dizzy and doesn't have to worry about holding up his neck, which tends to spasm.

It doesn't matter that we can't stand up or that we can't change our positions quickly. Because we laugh as we make love, as I trace my fingers over the scar on the back of his head and whisper – finally – I love you.

my not-so-brown boyfriend

Manj Sidhu



I was six and the wheels of the grocery cart squeaked as my mom and I skated through the aisles; it was routine. But that day, we took a detour through the bulk containers and I stopped in my tracks. Amidst the towering plastic containers, my eyes were captivated by the bright, round, red gummies glowing between the individually wrapped suckers and brown caramels. To this day, they're still my favorite.

"Mom... pllllleeeeeeeeaaaaassss-seeeeeeeeeee," I shamelessly begged, as only a child can. Of course, she did what all parents do when confronted with a child pleading for something that wasn't good for them: she kept on walking and said nothing.

I wouldn't realize that she only had enough money for the necessities that day until much later in life, but as she walked away, I realized that she couldn't see me. In fact, no one could see me. With those glorious towering bins as my cover, I lunged. I popped that clear lid wide open, thrust in my grubby fingers and shoved those juicy gummies into my mouth. I strutted out the double door, smug as those damn things rested in pieces in my stomach. My mom asked me about the red stains on my tongue later that night – that was when I told my first lie. I don't quite remember exactly what I had said (something about brushing my tongue too hard?) but I recall how I was careful not to look her in the face as I handed her my toothbrush and made a quick getaway. I don't know where this knowledge came from.

Years passed and I hit that age where bras, pads and horniness were synonymous: I was officially a teenager. But my sexual awareness began to feel hindered; kissing, holding hands and open affection didn't happen on my parents' watch. You'd think that the culture responsible for the *Kama Sutra* would encourage open, liberal attitudes, but no. My dad threw the remote when Ariel tried to kiss her prince and exclaimed, "Disney is junk!" (In some ways, I guess he was ahead of his time).

So I did what any horny, shy, pubescent teenager did pre-Internet: I turned to books. I found my first Harlequin Presents romance novel and it was as if I was given the nectar of the gods: I didn't even realize that what I was reading was pornographic. All I knew was that they answered all my burning questions. That is, until my parents saw the paperback covers featuring scantily clad women and banned me from reading them in the house.

But as luck would have it I worked at the library, so I smuggled them home at the bottom of my library bag and stashed them in my locker at school. Once I opened my locker and it had been so stuffed with romance novels, they had all spilled out into the hallway – my girlfriends have never let me live that down. My parents would tease me about always having my nose in a book; I'd laugh right along and learned that lying didn't always need to be verbal.

But the biggest test came when I began to date. My lovely immigrant parents and I had never seen eye-to-eye about the concept of marriage. They were from old stock: in their time, arranged marriages were the norm and you met your pre-vetted life partner on the day of the wedding. The notion of the trial-and-error approach to dating was an alien concept they believed was strictly reserved for the "other," the westerners, the *goreh*.

In my small-town high school, where I had known my guy friends since we were in diapers, I had no real love interests. University and living in residence, however, were mind-blowing. That's when I met Pat.

Pat was everything that I never knew I wanted: he was soft-spoken, smiled with his mouth closed, had a giant, gorgeous tattoo and was the first boy to tell me I was beautiful. The sex? We'd spend hours between classes chasing after orgasms, fogging up the windows of our dorm rooms and listening to his roommates yell through his door.

"Can't you guys keep it down?!"

Secretly, I think they probably enjoyed it.

Things would have been perfect except for one not-so-tiny detail: he wasn't brown.

I knew what my parents expected of me and I hadn't been planning to fall in love. I had just assumed that we would date and then break up. But then he moved in. We exchanged the L-word and promise rings. Things got serious, quickly – before I knew it, we were talking about a future together, life after university and our views on having beautiful mixed babies.

I then did what I did best: I decided not to tell my parents about it. I started small as I picked through my toolbox of lies: when they'd call to talk, I'd claim to be in a library studying and offer to call them back. If they asked who I was with, I'd bend the truth and say, "Oh, just a friend from class." Pat listened on, silently.

My brazenness fueled my lies, or perhaps my lies fueled my brazenness: either way, soon enough I was travelling around the world with Pat. And even though my parents paid for my airfare, I told them I was just with a few "friends" from school.

Once, my dad saw Pat's photo in my wallet.

"Whose picture is that?" He asked quietly. It was probably the only time I was at a loss for words. I turned around, walking away as I tossed a few words over my shoulder.

"No one." Thank God he didn't see how my face crumbled.

I had never set out to become the world's most accomplished liar: in fact, in every other aspect of my life, I adopted an almost cutthroat, brutal honesty. It was almost as if I was trying to make up for the guilt, the shame and the secrecy that I was carrying around.

Keeping two colossal aspects of your life – your family and your love – distinct and separate for over eight years is no easy task. If you can avoid it, do. I don't recommend it.

The day eventually came when I just got tired of the lies: I came out to my parents about Pat. It wasn't easy. But after a lot of fighting, a lot of tears, some (empty) threats, they relented. In fact, the first time that Pat was alone with my dad, he actually asked for my dad's blessing (yes, he's totally that type of guy).

My dad looked him straight in the face and laughed.

"You've already opened the hose. No point in asking how to open it now."

Shelby on telling someone

The build-up before being sexually intimate with someone is incredibly electric: the sexual tension, the passion, the longing, the wanting. When you get to those final moments before your lips touch, before your hands brush against their skin, before you feel their warmth against your body, the air is heavy with desire. All you can think about is how badly you want this person in front of you. But for me, there is another strong emotion present: fear. Fear of confessing what happened to me. Fear of their reaction. Fear of my reaction to their touch. Fear of being hurt again.

The first time I was sexually intimate with someone, I didn't experience that wonderful tension and passion with another person. I was numb and paralyzed with fear. I was sixteen. He was on top of me, begging for permission to touch me, to lick me, to kiss me, to "love" me. All the while, I kept repeating no, on the verge of tears, my breath short and my heart beating fast. When I surrendered my "no's" for silence, he took this omission of "no" for permission, tore off my clothes, and had his way with me. I kept telling myself that I should want this. This is intimacy. This is sex. This is love.

For almost a year, this pattern continued. He wanted to do things to me, or me to do things to him; he would beg me, I would say no, I would give up saying no, and he would get what he wanted. I never knew sexual, physical intimacy without this pain or fear for a long time. I thought that this was normal.

When I finally got away from that relationship, I started to see how toxic and abusive that relationship really was. Getting out was like waking up from a long nightmare. I was left in a state of self-loathing, covered in both physical and emotional scars that I wasn't sure would ever go away. I started looking for someone to fix me in any way I could. I was desperate for someone to love me and be gentle with me, to erase those marks he had left on me. It wasn't until a few years later that I realized: nobody was going to fix this. I had to find a way to put the pieces back together myself; through therapy, journaling, talking to friends, taking care of myself and so on. It has been like trying to glue the pieces of a broken vase back together again. And if I'm being honest, I'm still not entirely put back together five years later. I'm not sure if I'll ever be entirely fixed from this, but one thing I do know is that I am getting stronger every day, even though that trauma does still come out sometimes.

When I first tried dating in university, the fear of telling people about what happened to me was always at the back of my mind. *When should I tell them? What if they don't like me because of that? What would happen if I don't say anything?* I had only been physically intimate with one other person since him, and it took a lot of time and trust to build up to that point. I didn't know if other people would be okay with waiting that long.

I went on three dates with a guy who seemed sweet and understanding. When it felt like everything was lining up well with him, I decided to open up a little about what had happened. Not too much detail, but just enough for him to understand that I needed to take things a bit slower when it comes to sex and physical intimacy. To my relief, he was very understanding and supportive after I told him a bit of what happened. I felt all those fears and questions wash away, and in its place was a new-found confidence and acceptance. Maybe this wasn't as big of a deal as I thought it would be. I was silly for being afraid of opening up about this.

We ended up dating for about two months, and in that time, we actually had a lot of sex (which was unexpected even to me). Most of the time it was great, but there were a couple times where I would panic, usually if he was on top of me. I would suddenly become overwhelmed with a feeling of fear and dread – it felt like everything was happening all over again. I could feel his hands on me, I could hear his voice in my head, the pain that scarred me before was suddenly there again. It was a terrifying experience, not only for me but also my partner. He didn't know if he had done something wrong or not, and all I felt was guilt. I felt so guilty that this was happening, that my trauma was making him feel bad. I would apologize over and over, and he would always reassure me that this wasn't my fault. And even though I know, realistically, it's not my fault that this happened to me, I still carried an immense amount of guilt over everything that happened. *I'm sorry this happened. I'm sorry I'm like this. I wish I was normal. I wish I could just enjoy sex. I wish I wasn't afraid of it sometimes. I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I'm sorry.*

One of the worst experiences I've had since being in that abusive relationship was with someone I dated for only a short period of time. We were at his house in bed after a night of hanging out with friends. He had been drinking a little while I was completely sober. He was touching me and beginning to finger me when I started to feel that fear and dread setting in again and needed this to end. Now. "Stop." I reached down to pull his hand away.

He grabbed my wrist tightly with his other hand and replied "No."

I tried to pull my hand out of his grip, my heart rate immediately jumping up and my body becoming overwhelmed with panic. In a firmer voice this time, "Stop."

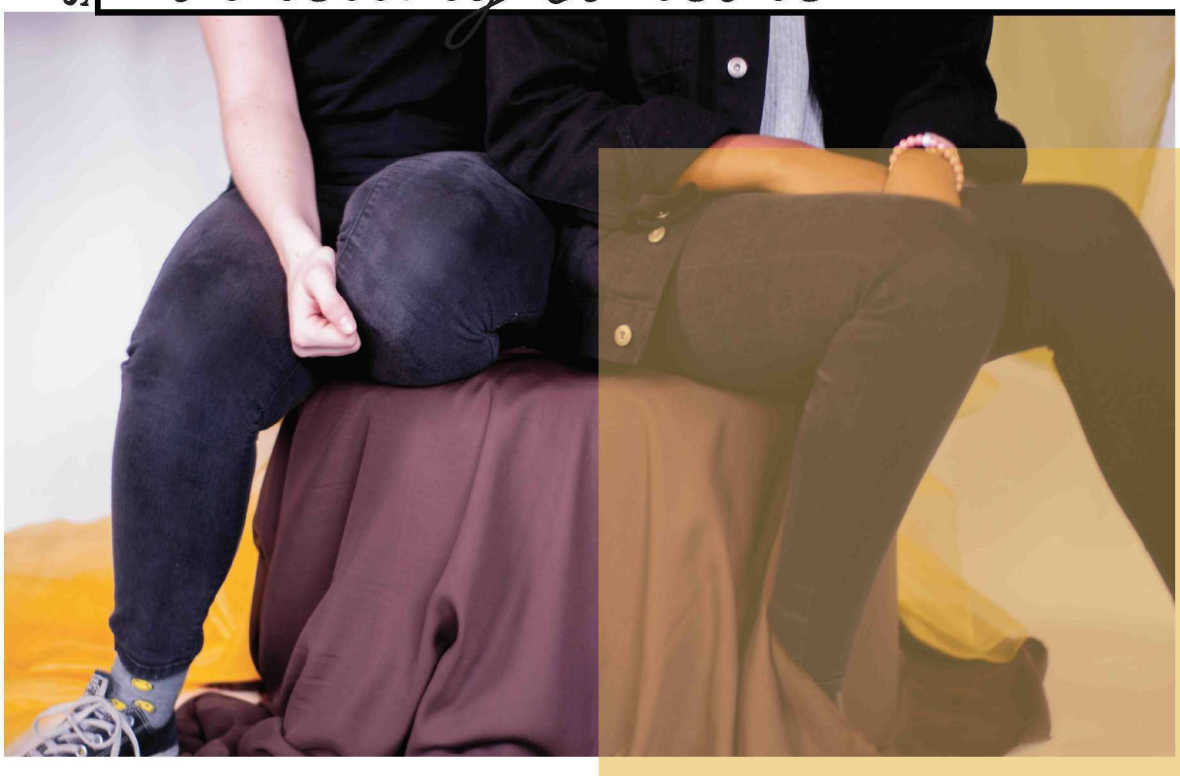
"No." Grinning, he started going faster.

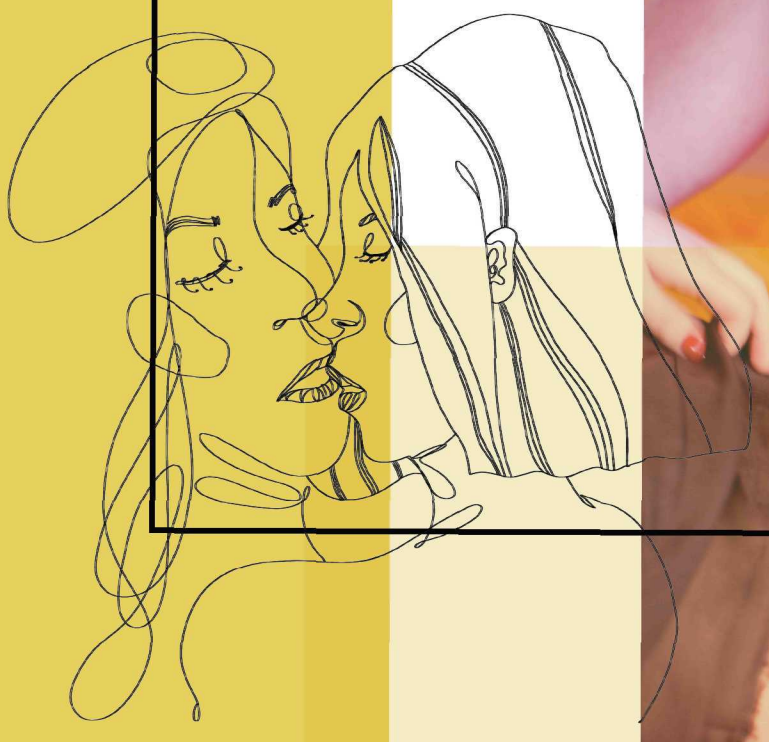
I sat up, pulling my body away from him and this time yelled, "Stop!"

He froze and looked up at me. I could see the dread and realization in his eyes as he pulled himself out of me. "I forgot, I'm sorry."

I burst into tears, shaking and terrified. He held me and kept repeating "I'm sorry" over and over. I didn't know what to say. I just kept crying.

Telling someone about what happened to me takes a great deal of trust – but then trusting them with my body takes even more. Not only am I trusting them with personal information but trusting them to be gentle with that information and mindful of it whenever we're together. Being emotionally and physically vulnerable with someone like that is overwhelmingly scary, but that doesn't mean it isn't worth it.





forays into polyamory

Annie

Under two months ago, it was just a word. Now it's *the* word. If you open my phone's browser (and go to private mode), you're accosted with it. If you were to take a trip inside my head, it comes up daily – more than daily, hourly – and is scrutinized minutely. It's taken over so completely that I wanted to use it recently to introduce myself in a lab meeting to an interloping doctor. "Oh, you wanted to know about my project? Nope. But my boyfriend has another girlfriend. What's up?"

Previously, I'd considered it in an offhand manner, as far as agreeing with it in theory. Left to my own devices, I probably would never have had the impetus to begin – but then I went on a Bumble date. To an Orange Julius. In Surrey.

Life comes at you fast.

He was two months out of a five-year heterosexual relationship, with the last year and a half of it conducted in a less-than-conventional manner: he and his partner dated other women together. So there, in the food court of the Surrey Central Mall, on date one, we got right into it. My own dating experience is run-of-the-mill. Three serious boyfriends, a number of flings, and a sprinkle of people whose names I never quite got round to asking about for the Google Doc I keep of everyone I've ever kissed (genuine extracts: "oh god awful North Carolinan who sucked at democracy," "excessively tall man," "goatee-sporting member of the Pit clientele," and personal highlight "a trip to Scandinavia is never complete without banging a hot half-Iranian dude, having a dead phone and becoming stranded in northern Denmark") – but I digress.

Despite having been cheated on and at one point suffering though a long-distance relationship, I've never been a jealous person, so I thought I'd find it all fairly easy. Not so. Turns out there's a difference between being jealous because you suspect something's going on, and being jealous because you know your partner has other partners. I've found I am susceptible to the latter.

As well as being unconventional, our relationship began with intensity. We discussed moving in together on date five; by date six we were in love, and said so. The trepidation I felt about embarking into polyamory was tempered by my disbelief over whether it was actually going to materialise: before I went back to England for Christmas, he stayed at mine almost every night for a week; he'd drop me off at work, go write angsty poetry in a cafe, and pick me up at 5 p.m. He went for one or two other dates, but we joked that I was "top girlfriend," so when I introduced my situation to friends and family, it was with a flippant "I've got a boyfriend, and he's got three other girlfriends, but I'm top girlfriend." This made it more palatable, as much for me and my pride as for anyone else. I think I subconsciously believed that when I came back after New Years, we'd transition to monogamy.

I liked the edginess of the label of polyamory, but I was having trouble grappling with a few ideas, not least that central tenet of monogamous society stating that if your partner has other partners, it must be a shortcoming on your behalf that's making you "not enough" for them.

My main ways to get around any discomfort were cold, hard logic coupled with honest and frank communication. I reasoned that I wanted him to be happy, and if seeing other people while I was away made him happy, why should I have a problem with that? I reasoned that if a friend said to me one day that they didn't need any other friends anymore, they wanted to be friends with me exclusively, and they expected me to stop seeing all my other friends, I'd probably briefly choke on my own spit. I reasoned that when my parents mentioned they'd spoken to my brother or my sister on the phone on a day where they hadn't called me, I didn't worry that they were considering that maybe they only ever needed two children, and were phasing me out. I reached for this logic when I was having insecure thoughts about him and his feelings towards me and found them largely successful.

Over time, the other people he was seeing fell away, except for one; and on New Year's Day, lying alone on an airbed in Calgary with a brutal hangover, I found out that he and she were in love, too. Ruminating on this led me to stalk her Facebook (obviously), and in true Vancouver style, it turned out we had a close mutual friend.

In polyamory land, your partner's other partner is known as your "metamour." My new metamour was more jealous than I was, and her attempt to restrain her jealousy was an at-times terrifyingly forceful campaign to become friends. The connection that we already had through him meant we knew personal things about each other from the outset; my instinct was not to directly address this, but she took a less nuanced, no-bullshit approach.

Once or twice she overstepped boundaries that I hadn't known I had, but being honest while acknowledging how weird the situation was for both of us ended up working well. A particularly memorable exchange was in reference to the fact that he and I had joked about making a personalized dildo, which involves taking an impression of a penis in clay and sending it off to some shady back-room office in the dodgy end of Gastown to forge it in sparks and silicone. He had told her about this, and I found her keen interest in the matter to be something I couldn't really handle. My relationship with her was still in its infancy, so I had to be careful to intimate that while most things were still kosher, this specific area was something I officially was Not Down With. So I sent a text I never thought I would: "Boyfriend's other girlfriend, cool. Being friends with the other girlfriend, cool. Girlfriend being involved with a personalized dick mould is I guess where I'm drawing the line."

It was a weird dance: trying to express what I wanted while being respectful of the potentially competing desires of someone I'd never met, with my lizard brain screaming "GET AWAY FROM MY BOYFRIEND, YOU HARPY!" and my human brain going "Jesus Christ, what is wrong with me? Am I truly so selfish as to be incapable of feeling compersion?" Ah, compersion. Romantically, that most elusive of emotions: "the feeling of joy one has experiencing another's joy."

If I even had a neural compersion centre before all this, it was definitely smaller than my ego centre.

My friends have all been incredibly supporting and readily giving of advice. My only small issue has been the fact that it's all come through a monogamous lens – hearing things like "I couldn't do that," "that sounds so weird," and "I think I'm just too jealous" on a regular basis solidifies those as the norm and seems to carve into stone how bizarre and divergent I am being. Listening to polyamory podcasts and talking to my metamour as we've grown closer has helped a lot to normalize this, and we're at the stage now where we can hang out as a trio as long as he's not too affectionate with either of us.

I like to think that if nothing else, it's definitely been a wild ride for me (and for all of my group chats). With mishaps ranging from flat tires (with the accompanying creation of a podcast that would be most accurately categorized in the incredibly niche genre of "polyamory and roadside assistance"), to crying at my desk at work, to discussing the three of us moving in together, there's never a dull moment. I remain unsure whether that's inherent to polyamory, or some factor of the three of us, or it's just because it's new and we're all making it up as we go along – but the more comfortable we become together, the more we are able to enjoy ourselves.

And I don't mean that in a group sex capacity. If I had a dollar for every person who asked if we were having threesomes, I'd be some way towards a deposit on a lovely three-bedroom house in Kits for us.

Polyamory isn't without its pitfalls, but I've learnt a lot about myself, and my personal goals are to become a more open, compassionate person and a more effective communicator. My ultimate advice, however, would be this: if you've stayed over at one girlfriend's house, maybe got a bit frisky in the morning, and gone from there to lunch with another girlfriend, and you think you've washed your beard enough, maybe give it another quick scrub before you leave the house. Just to be safe.

747 days of honesty

Bridget Chase

Do you want to come back to my place?"

There was a pause that was long enough for me to know the answer. She shook her head politely, and told me she should be getting home. "But," she added, "let's see each other again next week?" All was not lost, and I had accomplished my real goal: another date with a fantastic girl.

She hopped on a bus and I hopped in a cab. About three minutes into my ride, I got a call.

"Hey, this is kind of embarrassing, but I think I missed the last Skytrain and I don't think there are any buses that will take me all the way home. Could I actually crash at yours?" I asked the cab to turn around, and met her on the side of the road by Granville Bridge.

When we got back to my basement suite, I did the awkward sweeping hand gesture to show her around the living room. "This is pretty much it," I said. "My roommates are probably asleep. And here's my room." I opened my door and ushered her in. We stood there in silence, staring at my partially unmade bed.

The static tension between us hummed lightly in my ears as she sat down and pretended to study the uninteresting knick-knacks scattered across my shelves. I was left wondering what my next move should be.

"Do you... want some pyjamas?" I asked. She looked down at what she was wearing, deemed it inappropriate to sleep in, and nodded. When I realized that I didn't have anything other than neon yellow boxer shorts, I folded them into a little square to try and present them as formally as possible, alongside an old cotton t-shirt I'd received from some volunteering gig years ago. She stood up to change, and I turned around to give her privacy.

With my back to her, I said, "I'll sleep on the couch." She let out a huff of offence. I faced her sitting back down in the bed, thin legs looking gangly in the oversized shorts.

"Uh, no it's your bed, you can sleep here too."

"You sure?"

"Yeah of course. If you want, I can sleep on the couch?"

"What? No! I don't have a problem sleeping in the same bed, I just... It's okay, it's cool."

I turned off the light and we both shuffled our way under the covers. I crossed my arms, and then realized I was acting like a corpse in a coffin and tried to loosen up. The comforter felt heavy. The body heat radiating off of her gave me chills. The silence lingered, and I could hear both of us thinking about what we should do to break it.

"Are you warm enough?" I said.

"Why won't you touch me?" She said.

Our voices collided as we both spoke, and I realized that we had two different ideas about how the night was going to progress.

"What?" I asked.

"Yes I'm warm enough. Do you not want to touch me?"

"No! I mean, yes, but I didn't think you wanted me to touch you."

"Why would you think that?"

"I don't know, I guess I just... didn't get the vibe?"

"You don't have to touch me."

"But I want to touch you!"

"Then touch me!"

I rolled over and put my hand on her arm. "Sorry, I guess because you said no to coming over originally, I figured that you just needed a place to sleep. I didn't want to overstep any boundaries."

"I said no originally, but I do like you a lot," she said. My eyes had adjusted enough within the dark to see the curve of her smile, and even if I hadn't been able to see it, I could hear it in her voice. She touched my shoulder and I leaned in to kiss her.

I cupped her face with my hands. We shifted to a more comfortable position. I looked down at her as things began to heat up. As I slid my hand up her waist, I felt her go still. She was kissing me back, now with less urgency. I stopped.

"Hey, do you want to do this?" I asked, pulling back from her face. She looked at me and said yes. But her body language said no. It wasn't particularly hard to tell – she looked nervous, and the hesitancy in her voice took that "yes" down a notch into "maybe" status.

"Are you sure?" I asked again. "We don't have to go any further than this. I definitely don't want you to feel uncomfortable."

The breath of relief that escaped her lips hung between us. "Actually... no. I don't want to go any further right now." She pulled me back down towards her. "But I am enjoying this."

I wasn't a mind-reader that night. 747 days later, I'm still not a mind-reader and neither is she. 747 days of love with the same girl from that fumbling evening, and we're both still asking questions. "Do you like what I'm doing?" "Are you comfortable?" "Do you want me to stop?" During romantic experiences after pancake breakfasts, or sloppy sessions after a late night on Davie Street, these are the ways we deepen our intimacy through trust. Questions don't limit us, they allow us to explore possibilities that have made our sexual experiences magnetic and frequent.

"That feels weird, take that shit out."

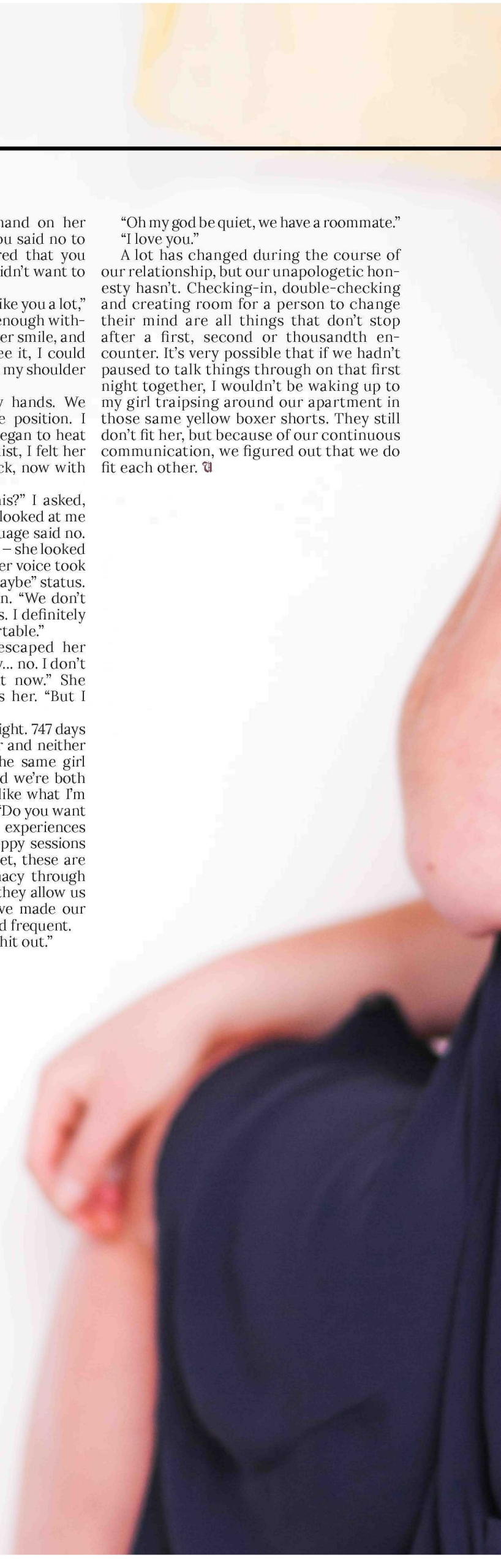
"Harder! Wait, slow down."

"That's much better."

"Oh my god be quiet, we have a roommate."

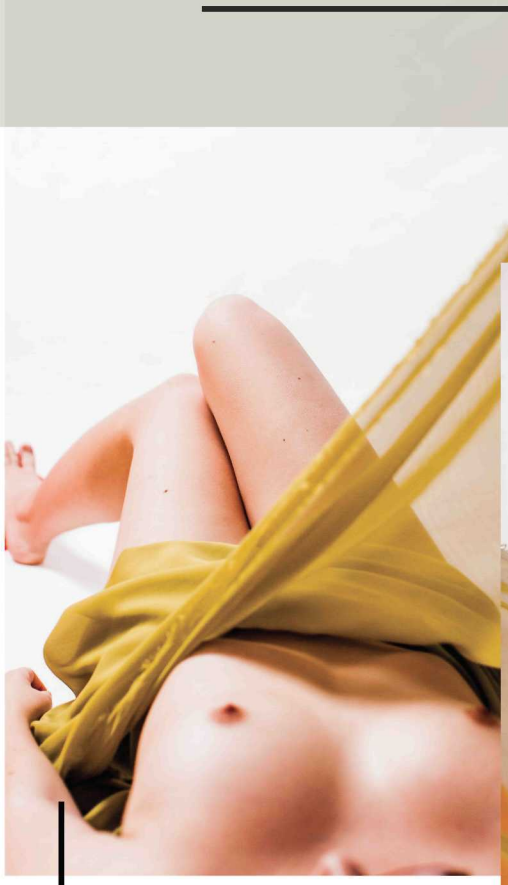
"I love you."

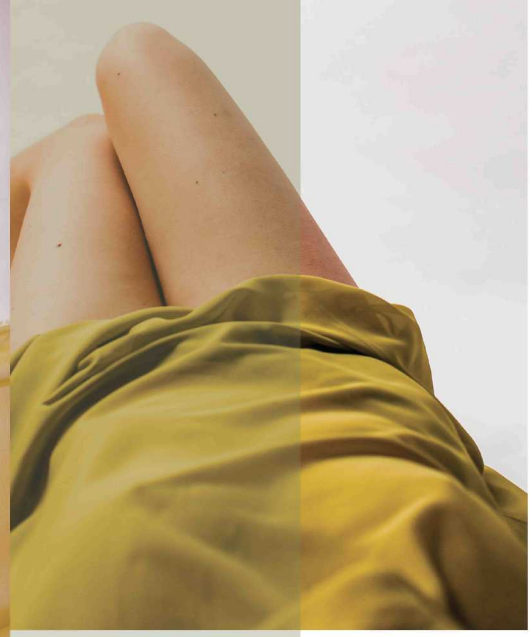
A lot has changed during the course of our relationship, but our unapologetic honesty hasn't. Checking-in, double-checking and creating room for a person to change their mind are all things that don't stop after a first, second or thousandth encounter. It's very possible that if we hadn't paused to talk things through on that first night together, I wouldn't be waking up to my girl traipsing around our apartment in those same yellow boxer shorts. They still don't fit her, but because of our continuous communication, we figured out that we do fit each other.



body language

Emilie Kniefel





Up we soared to impossible heights, our hair whipping our faces and sticking to our teeth. We flailed our tar-black soles, we laughed into the wind, we dangled there forever. And then we plummeted back down to earth. The ground below, a dark undulating sea, stretched wide and swallowed us whole. Then, with our shrieks, launched us back up.

We flew and fell like this, tirelessly. Until we discovered that we could shoot up even higher, and maybe touch a cloud or even the moon, if we stunted someone else's jump before they even took off. "I stole your bounce!" we called from the top of the sky. Breathless. Triumphant. During one of these frantic trampoline days, the first words told me that my body wasn't just for jumping. Instead, they screamed, it was meant to be compared.

"Her legs are hairier than mine!" squealed my neighbour's pointing finger.

That summer, sitting on a hill beside my friend who liked Twizzlers, I'd tried my tongue on it, this newfound body language. Tentatively, pulling up roots with my fists, I'd pointed out that I was fat. It was more of a question than anything else, but our freshly-mown world had no oxygen for my attempts at trampoline talk. My friend's eyebrows only converged in confusion. No you're not, she'd said, and I believed her. We rolled down the hill, grass in our giggling mouths.

Then I transferred to a school where the girls straightened their hair and owned the right clothes and knew the best corners for kissing. These girls were fluent in my neighbour's dialect. Every word was spoken in the comparative, every girl defined in relation to: prettier than, skinnier than, cooler than. In the locker room before PE, each girl watched the others' crouching bodies and declared the details that made her own inadequate. It was a ritual contest in self-scrutiny – the more defects you could list, the prettier, the skinnier, the cooler you were. I learned quickly, stuttering my own version of this venom. Mostly afraid someone would suspect my quiet blasphemy, my audacious certainty that there was nothing really wrong with my body. I'd been naked before, but never this exposed. I took to wearing a tank top under my shirt.

My new best friend was the one to finally capsize me. We were on the swim team together, always either encased in skin-tight suits or stripping them off. There was nowhere to hide, and everything to see. My friend, drenched in the blurred, bloated distortions of her underwater vision, walked into the changing room, pulled my head under the surface, and showed me how to see.

She had her mother's spindly legs, and I didn't. My legs weren't long at all, actually, and they weren't thin; but they were hilarious. A comedic flaw that filled her goggles with tears. "If not for your legs," she lamented, "you would be a perfect angel." Her words echoed, their laughter like chlorine on my skin. Pungent and un-scrubbable. My legs were a palpable stench that I could never shower off. A deficiency that anyone could smell if they drew too close.

Eventually I found my land legs on the tennis court, where staccato feet drummed a different beat. Power was praised. My legs propelled. I became re-acquainted with my anatomy – skin, muscle, bone – not as dissectible cadaver, but as intricate machinery. I was part of a self-sustaining system growing stronger with every movement, and my beauty sprang from my ability to work with it. To partake in the miracle that was my own physical grace.

But just as I came to worship it, the very part of my body that I extolled and adored – its meticulous functioning – vaporized.

My body looked in the mirror, inspected her own reflection, and decided that her thyroid cells did not belong. She identified herself as an intruder, and she led the attack. (An act not too disparate from our own autoimmune disorder of self-hatred: the way we select arbitrary parts and wish they'd never been there in the first place. How we seek to destroy constituents that are inextricably Us and Ours.)

Enlisting all of my forces in her civil war, my treasonous body crumpled my routine. I could hardly stand, so I rode my bike to class. I took baths. I stopped shaving. I watched as my stomach rolled into itself, and counted the little hairs as they grew down my shins. These physical changes flagged a country I no longer controlled, a landscape overgrown with forced neglect. I scrubbed my shoulders, my toes, and there they were – the boy on the trampoline, the best friend in the locker room – shrieking and cackling with renewed fervor. My body had rendered herself useless; I could no longer take solace in her strength. But when I looked to see if she was beautiful anyway, theirs were the only words I had for answers.

I didn't need to be told that I was more than just a body; I knew that I had my mind, my family, my potential for good. But I was also a body. The microcosm of adolescence had taught me that much. And if bodies were cultural currency, I wanted to make sure mine was backed by something more than public consensus. I needed to know that she held inherent worth, value independent of market fluctuations.

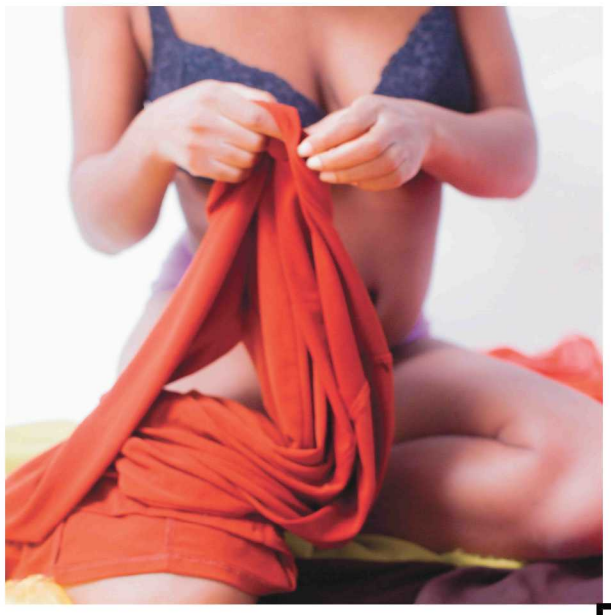
I needed to come up with an alternative dialogue. So I re-entered into conversation with myself.

Alone, I hung out with my naked body. I made and held eye contact with my sharp angles, the fragments I usually avoided. The parts of me that had, at some point, been deemed somehow wrong. Whose very existence offended. Like my prominent pubic bone, or the hairs that newly curled around my nipples, sprouted under my arms, and flowed down my legs. The way my breasts spread when I lay down. How my nose swayed slightly left. I didn't wave my list around in a middle school locker room, touting it as proof of humility. I went down each column, bone by misfit bone.

I stroked my most untouchable edges and committed them to memory. Hoping to familiarize myself with my skeletal map until I knew it like the back of my hand, or until I knew it by heart. Until no part was particularly remarkable, and my topography wasn't hierarchy, but whole. I hoped there was wisdom there, tucked away between the ridges of my most familiar mystery.

I collected nudes for their own sake. I toyed with the illusory permanence of momentary capture, the stories one could tell with a pose. How a shrug could make a breast wilt or perk. How an elbow awry, a collarbone jut, could mutate my ribcage into alien architecture. These weren't photographs for distribution; this was curation for my own consumption. A reassertion that I, before anyone, got to expose and explore my body in all her contortions.

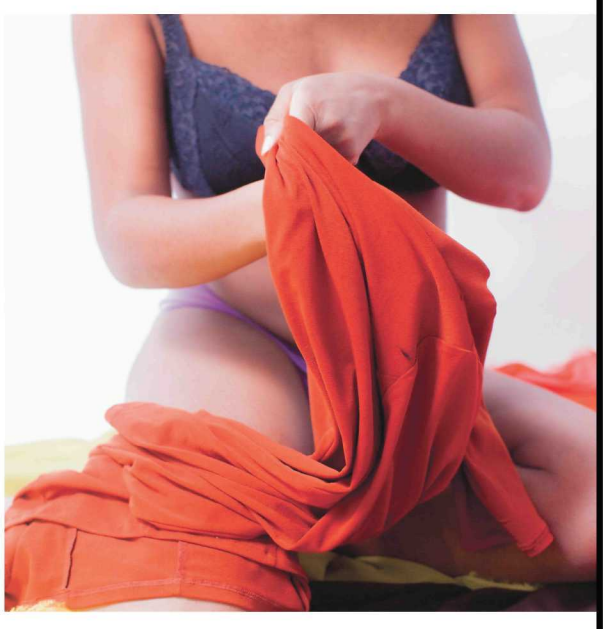
And quietly, I recovered shaky peace. I relished a maybe-obvious but basic truth: that this was my body and not anyone else's. That whether it wilted or perked, ran or couldn't, it was still, always, undeniably mine. This wasn't proprietorship, but companionship. Occupancy. This distillation, my corporeal relationship stripped and laid bare, resisted adjectives. There was no comparison. It was a bounce that couldn't be stolen – because it was the insistent beat of my own unwavering heart.



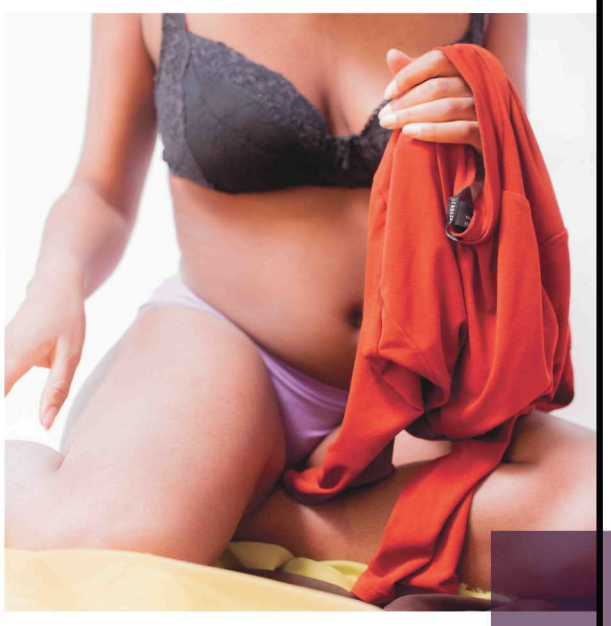
The number of sexual partners you have, no matter how many or how few, is absolutely not reflective of who you are as a person or how attractive you are to others. ¶

Danielle Olusanya, Emma Livingstone, Hana Golightly, Kate Colenbrander, Madeleine Link,

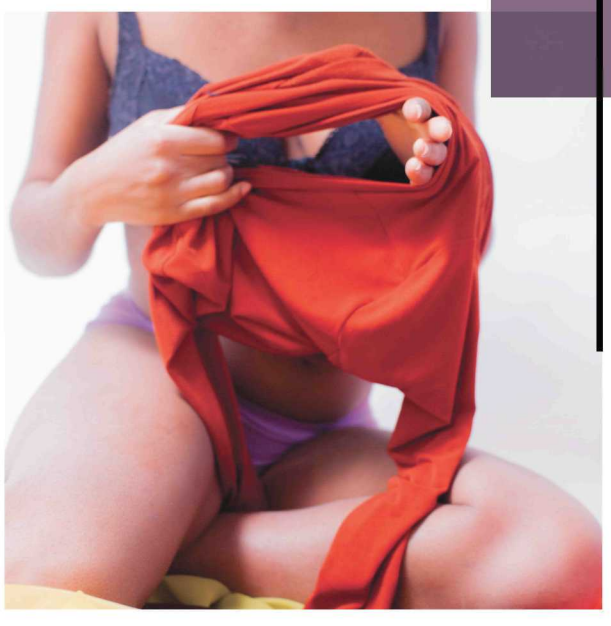
Moira Wyton & Zak Vescera

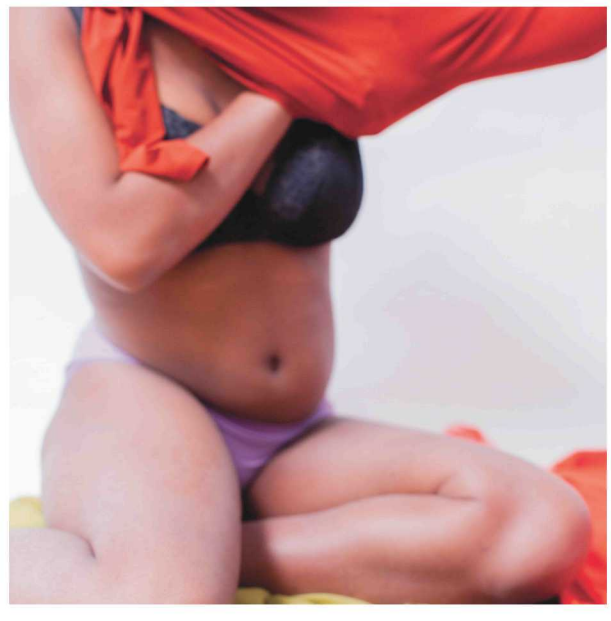


I thought public bathroom sex would be really hot but, when done sober, it was a lot of pausing to hear if someone was trying to open the door and having to confront the image reflected in the mirror of what it would look like if two Winnie the Pooh cosplayers went at it. ¶



Why does every description of a female orgasm make it seem like having one takes you to another dimension? I don't think I've had a comparable experience, so I'm still not sure what it's supposed to feel like. ¶



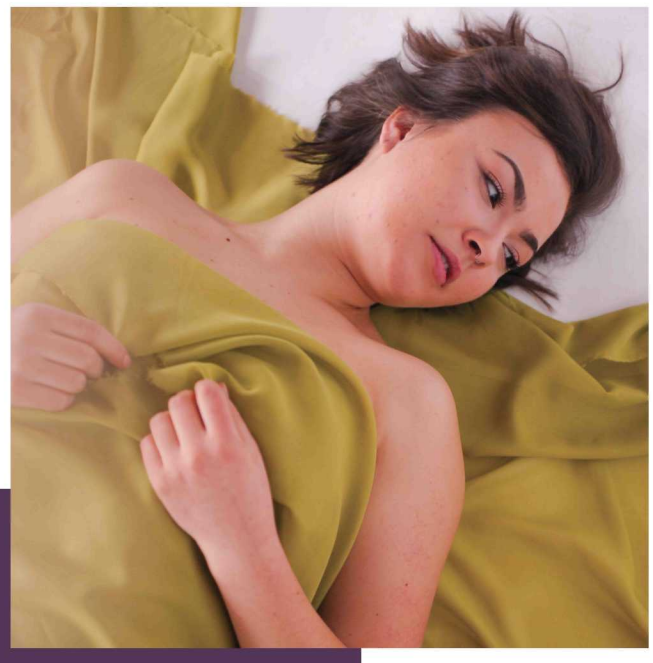


You watch porn. I watch porn. Everyone who hasn't watched porn is either a saint or a liar, and those aren't even mutually exclusive. Let's stop pretending we're all chaste on the internet and start talking about it. ¶

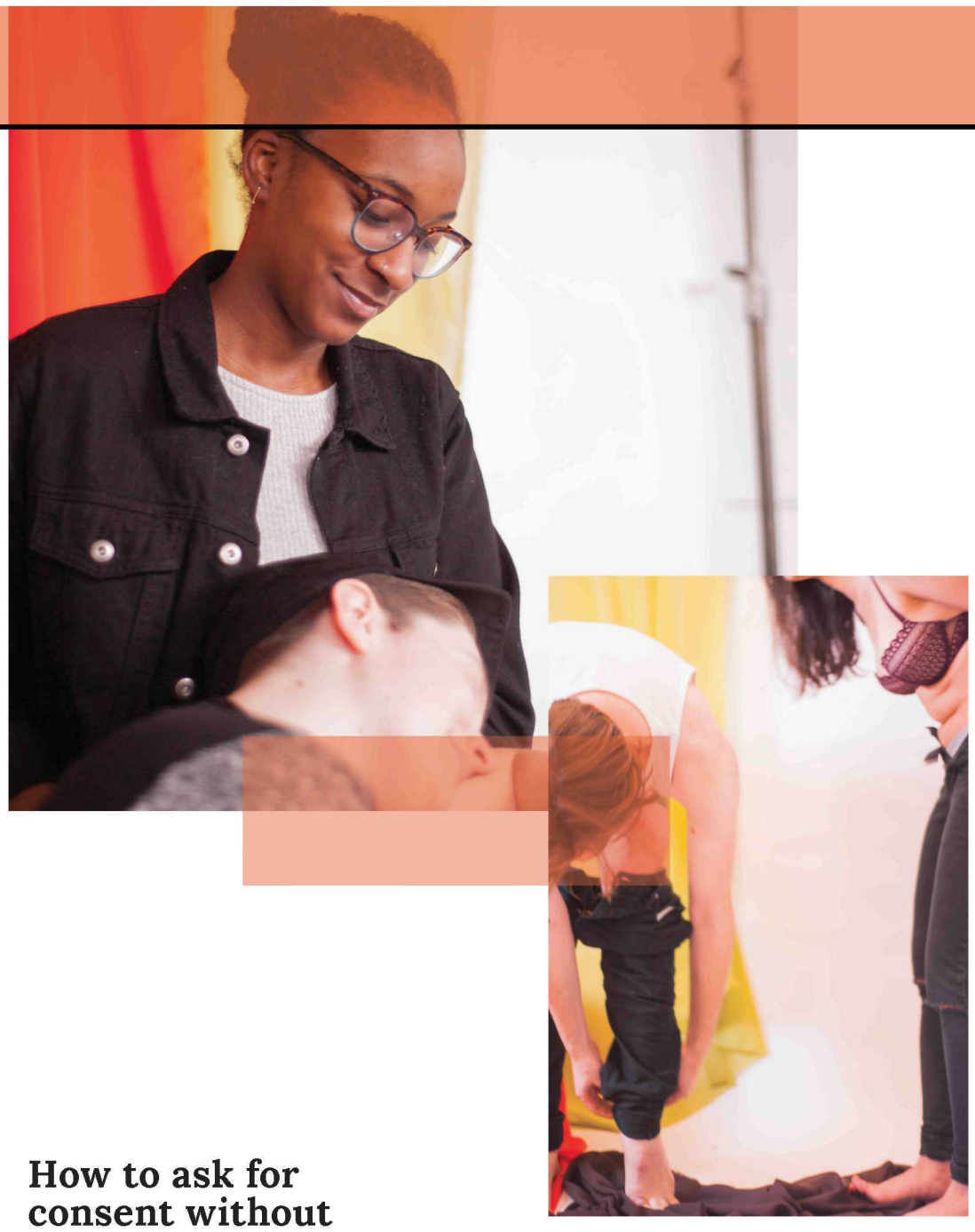
Sex is only as big of a deal as you make it to be. ¶

STOP IT! STOP PUSHING PEOPLE'S HEADS DOWN WHEN THEY ARE TRYING TO GIVE YOU A BLOW JOB. No one likes gagging, and no, even if you think they do, no one wants to choke on your STUPID penis! STOP THIS! ¶

Honestly, I'm tired of hearing about kink. Don't get me wrong: I couldn't care less what two (or more) adults do in the privacy of their home, so long as it's safe, sane and consensual. But that doesn't mean I want to hear about it. ¶



I'm not jealous of your boyfriend. I don't feel possessive of you because I know that I have you in a way that no one else can touch. ¶



Lean into the awkwardness and get tested

Moira Wyton

Throughout the highs and lows of my own sexual health, getting tested was never something I wanted to bring up. I felt like asking someone about whether or not they were "clean" was passing judgement on their sexual practices and also killed the mood.

Only after I had to take some unpleasant antibiotics and endure an involuntary week of celibacy did I realize that asking someone when they were last tested wasn't passing judgement – it showed I cared about mine and my partner's sexual health and that I wasn't afraid to kill the mood a bit in order for both of us to feel more comfortable.

I get it, getting tested isn't glamorous. It's a lot like taking out the trash: annoying and inconvenient, but things could start to smell if you don't do it regularly. Because most STIs don't present symptoms for a long time – if ever – getting tested between each and every partner is the best way to keep yourself and others safe. Take a deep breath, have the conversation and go from there. If someone is angry or flippant that you brought it up, they're not someone you should be sharing your body with in the first place.

How to ask for consent without "being weird"

Jack Hauen

There's a perception out there that asking for consent just as things are getting hot and heavy – or ideally before – is an awkward thing to do. That's horseradish. You know what kills the mood? Your partner having to try to tell you politely to stop doing something, while you're trying to do it. Also: saying things like "horseradish."

You know what takes things to the next level, sexy-wise? (Besides not saying "sexy-wise"?) Getting your partner actively involved in fooling around. Remember: sex isn't something you do to someone. If you're not both into it, things can cross a line quickly, and also, why bother?

I can personally guarantee you that no person will think that whispering a quick, "Is this okay?" is awkward. In my experience, quite the opposite. A brief check-in before anything serious happens can not only make sure everyone is on the same page, but get your partner feeling more confident that they're not going to run into any weirdness for the rest of the encounter. More confidence = better sex.

Some other phrases to try:

"Can I [unhook your bra/take this off]?"

"How's that?"

"Horseradish."

Period sex

Katya Downey

Put a towel down. Or don't, and just make sure you've got a change of sheets ready if you ever have guests over. Period blood is sterile – there's nothing to worry about unless the sight of blood makes you faint.

Oral sex doesn't have to be off the table, either – the blood comes out of the vagina, not the clitoris. A tampon or cup coupled with lying on your back (letting gravity keep stuff away from the clit) should set you up just fine.

Use lube!

Natalie Morris

My friends,

Sometimes things get rough. Things get tight. Things get a little uncomfortable. Things get a little long.

You've got to lube it up.

I'm not kidding. Buy yourself some lube, throw it in your bedroom drawer and apply as needed – and trust me, lube is almost always needed. You think you're enjoying sex now? Mmm, you poor child.

Sometimes there's a weird feeling for those with vaginas to use lube because "our bodies are supposed to do that for us" but just because you're not producing doesn't mean you're not enjoying. Being aware of your body and help out when you can.

Lube.

Lube.

LUBEEEEE.

More specifically, you have three types of lube: oil, water and silicone based. Oil-based lubes are great for those looking to be as natural as possible. Coconut oil is a popular choice, but oil-based lubes can damage latex condoms and might interfere with embryo development or damage sperm, so only use them if you're protected against what you need to be protected against in other ways.

Water-based lube is the most common type (think Trojan and KY), and generally you'd be fine with picking any one up. They don't affect condoms and feel like the most natural lubricant. They're usually tasteless and can be used in any type of sex.

Silicone-based lubes are a bit more expensive, but they're made to last longer. Looking for a two-hour romp without any reapplication? Grab a silicone. Trust me. They're made to last longer and stay slippery. Just make sure you don't use it with your silicone toys because they can break down the fun.

Now go out there and enjoy your newly-lubed sex!

Sex toys

Katya Downey

First off, the website Oh Joy Sex Toy answers the question, "what if there was a sex toy review site, but better, and also comics?"

Heads up: the Wellness Centre sells a bunch of stuff for all bodies. Short on ideas? Drop by.

Vibrators make an awesome addition whether you're flying solo or partnered up. Figure out what works when you're alone, then add a person.

Dildos pair well with other toys. Add a vibrator, cock ring, another dildo, another person – you've got options.

Butt plugs, or any kind of butt stuff, is easier when your thighs are at a less-than-90-degree angle to your torso, with your knees close to your chest. And for the love of all that is loveable, use lube (silicone- or oil-based, because water based absorbs too quickly). Your sphincter's job is to keep stuff moving out, so you're gonna need a little pressure on that thing to keep it in. If anything hurts, SLOW DOWN, back out a little, and try again.

Nervous about introducing toys to your partner? Familiarize yourself with the toy on your own time, so if your partner's not into it, you can still have fun.

Remember: nobody from "Sex-Havers Weekly" is standing by with a clipboard to critique your form. If something doesn't work, laugh it off and try something else. After all, it's just sex.

How to "correct" your partner

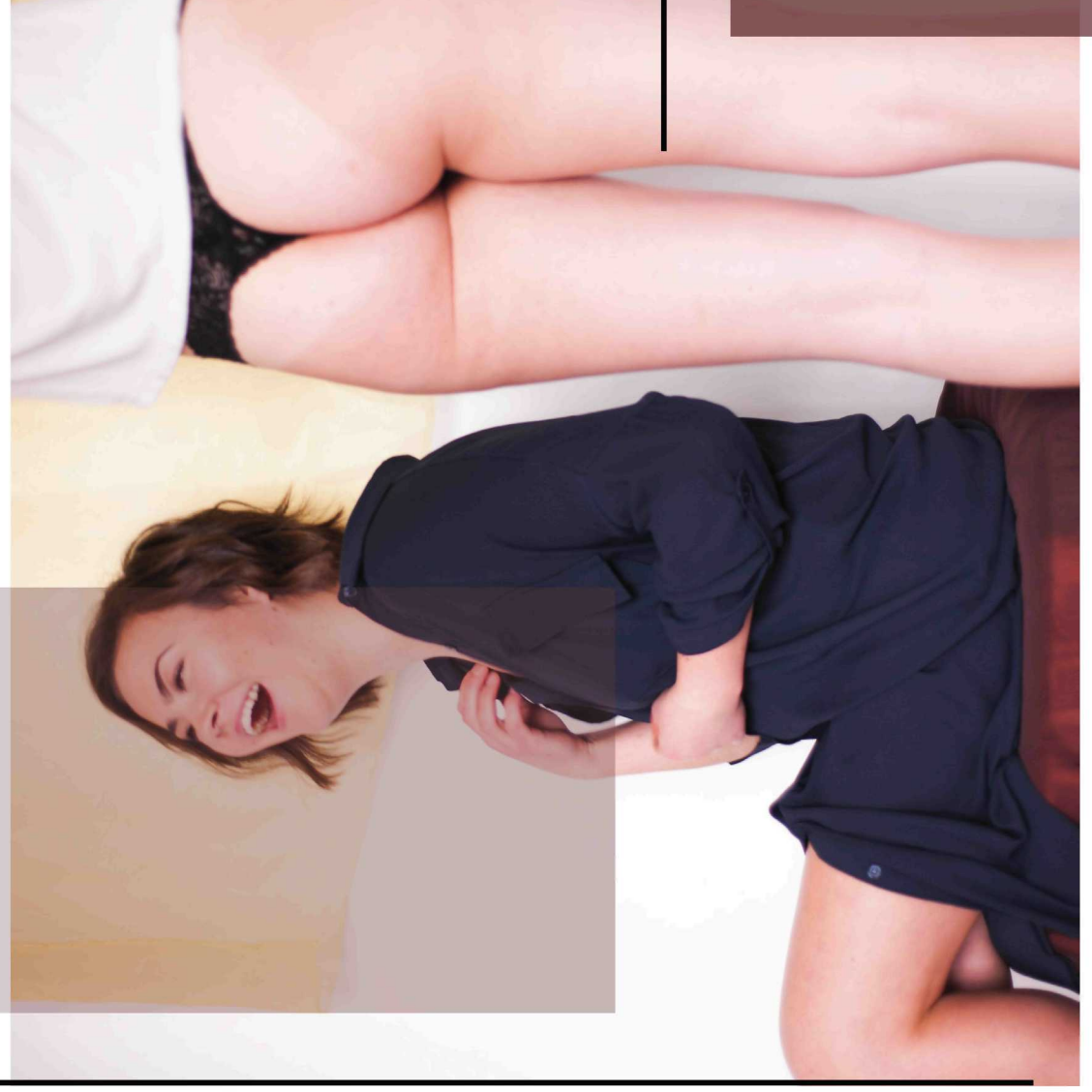
Katya Downey

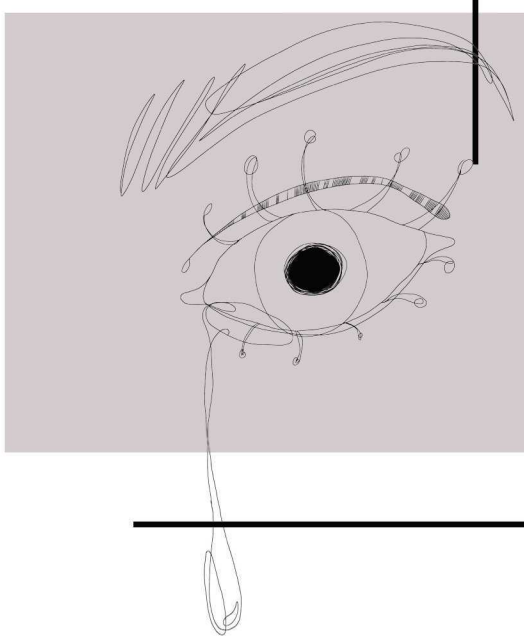
Communication is your main saviour here (duh). Concrete directions, like "a little softer" or "to the left" can be hot as hell. You've gotta be good at feedback to be good at sex.

If that's an uncomfortable thought, think of feedback as a favour you do for your partner, whose goal should be to please you. Conversely, if the thought of receiving feedback makes you uncomfy, figure out where that comes from. In all probability, they're doing it to improve the sex for them, not to make life difficult for you.

If verbal directions aren't your thing, use touch: pleasure yourself and guide their hand over yours so they can feel what you're doing.

If it's all too much, switch. Go back to stuff that worked earlier, touch yourselves mutually, pause and order pizza, whatever works.



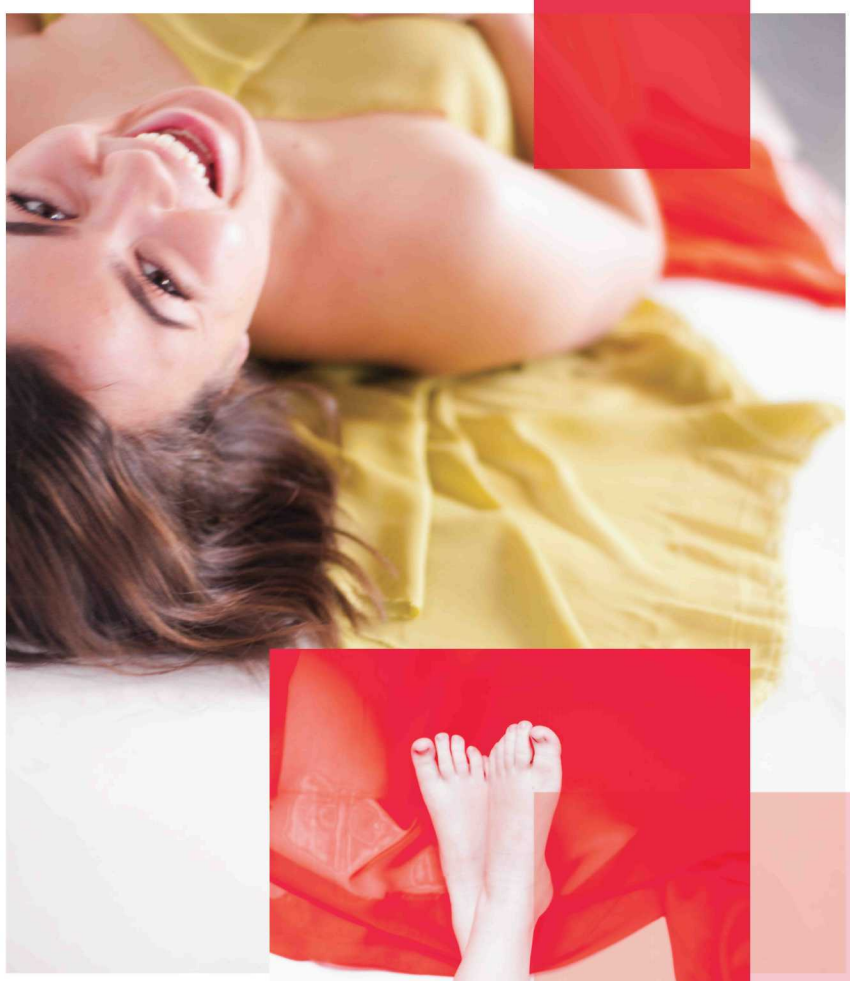


resources for sexual exploration

Nivretta Thatra

Often questions about sex can leave us at a loss for an answer – we draw a blank or grin with reddening faces because we simply don't know. And in this space of uncertainty is the potential to explore new, fun, nerve-wracking and informative perspectives, allowing us to better understand ourselves on the path to honest answers. Thankfully, resources abound to help with sexual exploration, from toy shops to websites to masturbation guides.

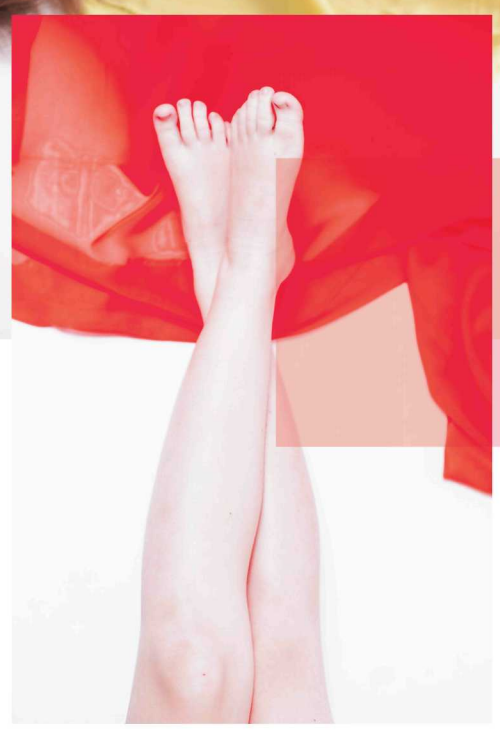
Free Pornography



Porn can lead to unhealthy addictions to unrealistic bodies and an expectation for sex based on performance rather than integrity. But addictions are a risk with all media, and there is a more optimistic side – with some forethought, you can choose to subscribe to less troubling sources of entertainment to help explore your sexual preferences.

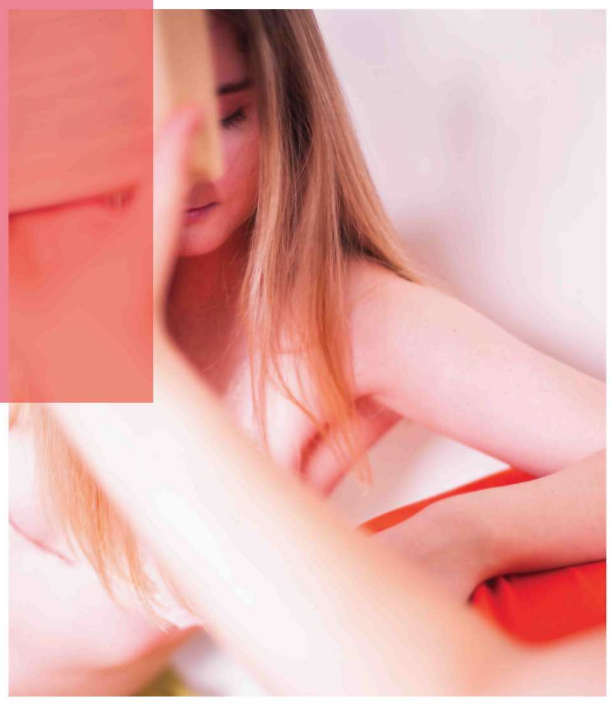
A collection of subreddits – including **r/trollxporn**, **r/chickflixxx**, **r/passionx** and **r/PassionYZ** – are devoted to porn that highlights the pleasure of all parties involved, amateur/realistic scenes and safe practices. Most posts are female-friendly, unlike much of mainstream porn, and link to free images, gifs or videos. The latter three subreddits have stricter guidelines for their users; at r/chickflixxx, for example, anyone can post content, but only women and genderqueer people are allowed to comment or vote. Subreddit r/passionx caters to hetero scenes with two people, while r/PassionYZ is for gay, lesbian, transgender, solo or group sex.

Sexy subreddits and tumblrs for every desire, kink and fetish also exist, as exemplified by **r/NSFW411/wiki/index**, a list of all NSFW subreddits. The range is stunning – kink communities on reddit include those for legs, toes, sound only and cosplay to name a few – but keep in mind that their quality and safety rides on moderators and the community of users.



Paid Pornography

Paid resources like **indiepornrevolution.com** and **kink.com** have more of an obligation to consistently providing a safe space for users. Kinkier sex, done properly within the guidelines of their respective communities, can be found here. Other paid porn films such as those at **erikalust.com/films/** and **afourchamberedheart.com** can be a good fit for those looking to explore storytelling and indie vibes within the context of eroticism.



Erotic Literature

Red alert – literature, although it comes with stuffy connotations, is not limited to wholesome content. The vastest free online English collection can be found at **literotica.com**, where any writer can submit their steamy stories. Finding your way around the site and figuring out how to use the appropriate filters can be a little tricky at first, but once you find a category and then a tag that interests you, such as the 'oral' tag within the category of 'erotic couplings,' the clicking around is well worth it.

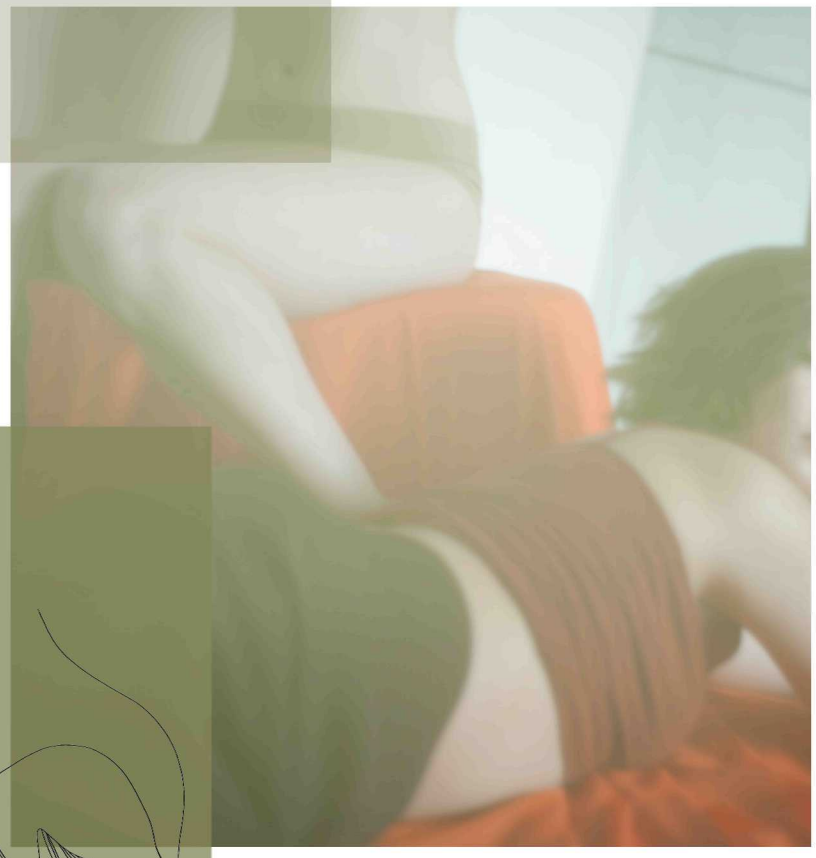
For those who get an erotic kick out of certain characters (or even celebrities), fans all over the world have content to offer on **archiveofourown.org** and **fanfiction.net**. Users can find smut on both sites by using the 'mature' filter.

Almost all of the stories on the previous sites are fictional depictions of sex. In contrast, **sexstoriesarena.com** and the subreddit **r/gonewildstories** claim to have writers who post their real sex encounters.

Social networks

Finding a partner (or a few) in order to find yourself is a valid desire. Sometimes a partner or community, one with whom you can be open and honest with, is the best way to enter new territory. Popular dating apps – like **Tinder**, **Bumble**, and **Grindr** – give many a sense of sexual freedom.

For those looking to explore the kink scene, **Fetlife** is designed for just that purpose. The site has many of the same issues as other social networks – female identifying folks receive an inundation of messages, for example – but users still find the platform useful for meeting and maintaining contact with fellow kinksters. Low key social gatherings called 'munches' are coordinated on Fetlife, so reaching out to the leader of a munch group can be the first step for a newcomer.

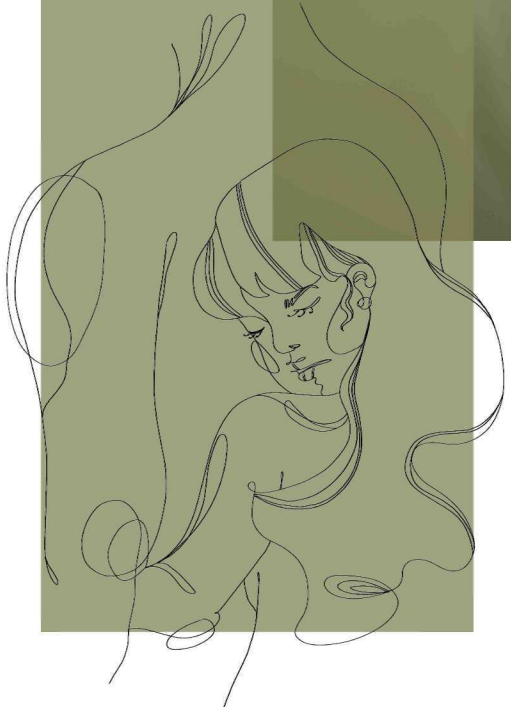


Toys

Sex toys can help you gain confidence when you're going at it solo, or can spice things up when used with your partner(s).

The Wellness Centre in the basement of IKB sells at-cost toys ranging from $5.50 to $40, from rings and anal toys to vibrators to sleeves. Remember: they're cash only. Off campus, **Womyns' Ware** on Commercial Drive offers a sex positive environment and high quality products.

Online, **adameve.com** (use the promo code ORGASM for 50 per cent off) is the Amazon of sex toys, with a no-frills approach and a fair amount of user reviews to help you make decisions. For a more curated shopping experience, **spectrum-boutique.com** offers aesthetically pleasing products and a sex-positive staff.



Professionals

Don't expect yourself to magically fall into the confines of society; for some, none of the resources listed above will be helpful or fun. Sex therapists exist, and seeking help is not shameful. They can help in relationships in which the participants aren't seeing eye-to-eye or offer counsel to individuals who are struggling to make a change in their sex lives but don't know where to start.

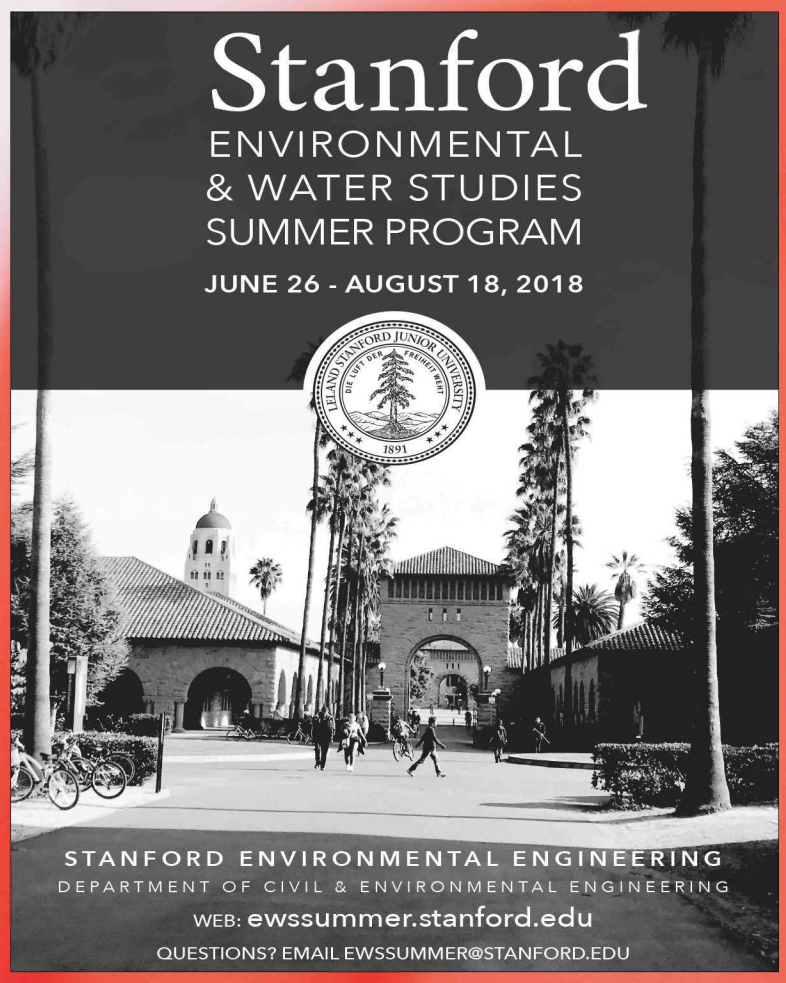
Drop by the **Wellness Centre** at IKB or reach out to a counselor at **UBC Counselling Services**; these professionals can then put you in touch with local professionals specializing in sex.

Miscellaneous

Our favourite miscellaneous online sources for sexy stories, convos, advice and everything else between here and the sun include: **omgyes.com**, where women teach women how to masturbate on video (there is a fee to join); podcasts **Sex Gets Real** and **Risk!**; all-inclusive sex advice column **Savage Love**, which is published online and in the *Georgia Straight*; and Vice's **Slutever**, a video series with the tagline 'the sex ed. you never got in high school.'

Safety

If you are engaging in sexual exploration, you are responsible for your sexual health. Get tested for sexually transmitted infections and diseases via **Student Health Services**, or find a clinic near you by using the **BC Centre for Disease Control**'s Clinic-Finder online.



PUBLIC CONSULTATION:

Enhancing student experience and housing in the University Boulevard area

To meet the significant demand for more student residences and address affordability, UBC is looking to add additional student and university housing, and academic sites, into the centre of campus.

We are seeking input on proposed sites near Brock Hall, Gage Towers, and Peter A. Allard School of Law.

Share your ideas online or in person FEBRUARY 28 TO MARCH 18

Online Survey: planning.ubc.ca/uboulevard

Public Open Houses: **March 6, 4pm to 7pm** | I.K. Barber Learning Centre, 2nd floor lobby

March 8, 11am to 2pm | The Nest, lower level

Questions?

Contact Angelique Crowther, Specialist, Communications and Engagement at **angelique.crowther@ubc.ca** or **604 827 3896**.

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
Campus + Community Planning