

Hillbilly Tantra

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Spelunking the Holiest of Holies (Forethoughts)

“Why don't you just drop them pants?” – Deliverance.

The working title of this chapter was originally “Practical Tantra,” However when I sent my working draft around to scholars focused on that topic, I received a rather vitriolic response. They apparently thought it was my intention to espouse certain ideas as Tantra. From this I realized I needed a title that expressed my intentions more clearly.

Though I am aware of much of the history of Tantra, this essay is meant to be more exploratory, strictly practical, strictly to the point, down and dirty. As such I'm concerned with basic principles, not entering into a heavily footnoted argument about the finer points of the spread and conflicts of Hindu and Buddhist Tantra. Also, Tantra deals with a great deal more than just sex, but in this chapter sex is the topic—the spiritual, energetic, and psychological dimension of sexuality right here, right now. I mulled this over for some time before bringing it up as an aside in a long phone conversation with Joseph Matheny, a fellow author and “media theorist.” After lamenting my dilemma to him, he suggested the title “Hillbilly Tantra.”

I think he hit the bulls eye-- along with giving you the topic we'll be spelunking, it provides a hint of the irreverent and faux scholastic tone I tend to adopt when exploring ideas such as these. In other words, my tongue is and will remain firmly planted in my cheek, and I think without recognizing that you might miss the most essential High Truth™ of Life, the Universe, and Everything: the most serious things in life are just setting you up for a joke, just as the most comedic are often glossing over the most stern truths.

Also as this is an *inquiry*, I am more concerned with asking questions than finding solid answers to them. I recognize that this doesn't fit into the thesis and exposition format of a standard essay, however I don't really care, either. The reason is very simple: this standard format creates misleading if not entirely erroneous conclusions from presuppositions which we *suppose* to be fact anyhow, generally as a result of cultural taboos and expectations. The fact is we're usually so set in our thought

patterns and rote emotional reactions that we can't see the forest for the trees.

Unfortunately I don't have the time in this investigation to discuss these fallacious myths both of method and authority, but I thought it was only fair to warn you up front that my goal as a writer is to get you thinking in ways you may not have before, to get you questioning your ideas and beliefs, to hold them up to new lights, or arrange them in new configurations. I am not about to sell you some final truth because I don't have it.

Well, I've gotten my forethoughts and warnings out of the way, my banjo's tuned, the grits are simmering, and my cousins are buck nekkid, so let's get right down to it: **what's the difference between good and bad sex?**

This question drives the glut of crap literature and 'zines that line our shopping centers. Of course, in typical materialistic style, they presuppose that there is some "move" or even "device" which will pave some secret passage between boredom, alienation, humiliation, and ecstasy.

Aside from the fact that it's easier to sell a "device" or teach a list of 5 secret moves that will drive her wild, these people aren't asking this seemingly inane question—*what's the difference between good and bad sex?* Such a deceptively easy question, when asked frequently and with enough conviction, quickly becomes a Zen koan, even a full-on obsession. Ask a question like that pointedly enough, and frequently enough, and the most familiar terrain can start to look a little bit like the outer rings of Saturn.

If this question is a given, why do so many people seem to lack it? Why does it *sell* so damn well? What function does it serve in our lives, can it serve in our lives, and what do our views on the subject say about us as people? Why do all the cultures of the world explicitly lay down rules – all of which contradict each other – on right and wrong sexual conduct? When procreation is taken out of the picture, why is it still such a fundamental, defining quality of a human being?

Ground Zero.

Perhaps it is a hackneyed idea that sex is at the root of our beings. Any idea which can be traced to Sigmund Freud¹ is out of vogue these days. Thankfully hillbillies don't care so much for what's in and out of vogue as what gets the job done. Besides, if you enforce celibacy for a

¹ [The basis of Freud's pioneering theory of psychoanalysis was centered around the idea of libidinal drive and sexual repression; in his work Civilization and It's Discontents he elaborated on this idea as the model of the formation of civilization itself.](#)

couple months, you might rethink your stance on this.

My experience has been that sexuality does not control our psyche from the top down, but it seems to prefigure it from the bottom up. It's a raw source of energy which drives us out of bed each morning. Aside from being the means by which we reproduce, it is the subversion of this urge which drives us to civilization - and its discontents. If you can control and cultivate your sexual energy, then you are capable of nearly anything. If blocked, like a stream it cuts another channel, or dams up, becoming stagnant or ultimately breaking the levies that hold it, often in disastrous ways. Chinese and ayurvedic medicine both recognize this; harnessing and directing sexual energy is considered paramount to general wellbeing.

There is a well-known link between sex and death in the mythologies of the world; the libidinal drive which drives us to participate in the world is also driving us towards our deaths. From this perspective, life and death are two sides of the same coin, much as man and woman are.

And here, plain as day, are the philosophical underpinnings of sex magick. The archetypal male and female energies which power and inform the universe can be brought together through a union of a particular male and female energy. This in no way precludes homosexuality, however at any given moment you will notice that some participants embody the active "yang" principle while others are participating as passive "yin."

This follows from a philosophy which recognizes everything within the human frame of reference as a perfect mirror of the natural world and vice versa. In fact the idea that all of these things are the same, merely expressed in different scales, permeates writings as seemingly culturally and historically disparate as the Greek Gnostics and early Chinese Taoists, who devised elaborate meditations along these lines, including meditating on internalizing the energy of various stars and constellations, not to mention cultivating what is ultimately sexual energy through the "microcosmic orbit" which traverses the physical and energetic body.

The Buddhist idea of Maya is relevant here as well. By definition, Maya is "the transitory, manifold appearance of the sensible world, which obscures the undifferentiated spiritual reality from which it originates; the illusory appearance of the sensible world." (American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, 2000.) It is the breaking of the one into the many, in the world of opposites.

It is also said that woman is the passage into Maya, not because of a sublimated hatred of the feminine, but rather through the simple recognition that it is through woman which we enter the world. This is seen as a symbol of the underlying sexual dynamism which allows the world, as we know it, to continue. In other words, sex is the prefiguring source of duality and dynamism.

One of the Buddha's teachings was that through desire and fear, our personal energy is tied or yoked to the world energy in such a way that we cannot extricate ourselves. That is, unless we become aware of its nature as illusion. Again we have a pair of opposites, desire being the motivation *towards*, and fear being the motivation *away from*.

It is as if we are all spiders, trapped within the webs we have woven. Our very personalities and inclinations themselves are a part of this binding web. In one of Joseph Campbell's lectures on Buddhism, he relates one of their central teachings by saying "...the lust of all the senses is a fire. Quench that fire." (Campbell, 1997.)

This "fire" is the underlying fabric of reality. Electromagnetic poles drive our X-boxes, our microwaves. The mechanism which allows for consciousness is electrochemical. Through extension, is there an electromagnetic aspect to the sexual act, as well?

$E=mv^2/2$ contains the factor m (mass) and v (velocity), and these would appear to be incommensurable with the nature of the empirical psyche. If psychology nevertheless insists on employing its own concept of energy for the purpose of expressing the activity of the psyche, it is not of course being used a mathematical formula, but only as its analogy. But note: the analogy is itself an older intuitive idea from which the concept of physical energy originally developed. The latter rests on earlier application of an activity not mathematically defined, which can be traced back to the primitive or archaic idea of the "extraordinarily potent." This mana concept is not confined to Melanesia, but can also be found in Indonesia and on the east coast of Africa; and it still echoes in the Latin numen, and more faintly, in genius. *The use of the term libido in the newer medical psychology has surprising affinities with the primitive mana.* This archetypal idea is therefore far from being only primitive, but differs from the physicist's conception of energy by the fact that it is essentially qualitative rather than quantitative. (Jung, 1969.)

Merely quenching the fire of the senses would be thanatos, the impulse towards destruction, decay, and death. (Thus Frederick Nietzsche's assessment of Buddhism and Christianity as agents of "pessimism.") According to common knowledge, this was postulated by Sigmund Freud as coexisting with and opposing the life instinct. However the idea precedes him, from culturally and historically similar sources such as the dour German philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer, to disparate Pagan and Aboriginal traditions across the globe and throughout time.

The practice of sex magick, as I think of it, reverses this—the trick is not to quench the fire, but instead to master it. Use the sexual impulse, don't let it use you. Stealing fire from the gods is one of the basic

principles of practice. Becoming a vessel or instrument of the divine is another common motif, which is attained by fanning those flames, all the time if possible, without being particularly attached to them. Eventually, through this approach, one strives to replace desire and fear with blissful knowledge of the immediate, eternal present.

Between Heaven And Hell.

"Erotism, it may be said, is assenting to life up to the point of death... If a precise definition were called for, the starting-point would certainly have to be sexual reproductive activity, of which erotism is a special form. Sexual reproductive activity is but only humans appear to have turned their sexual activity into erotic activity. Eroticism, unlike simple sexual activity, is a psychological quest independent of the natural goal."

-Georges Bataille, *Erotism: Death and Sensuality* (1986.)

Let's return to our initial question. Imagine two sexual encounters, on the surface identical in every way. You went through every possible posture permutation in the Kama Sutra. All the paint on the walls is now clumped under your fingernails. Your neighbors hate you passionately.

However in the first encounter, both people's energies are depleted as a result. Perhaps they feel like a dog that keeps getting scratched in that one spot and can't keep it's leg from twitching no matter how it might try. Now the alcohol has worn off as they slink into a dark hole somewhere to listen to The Smiths until the mascara has run so badly they look like they just did nine rounds with Muhammad Ali.

In the other case, they feel energized, more in synch with themselves and those around them. A feeling of being personally reborn accompanies it, a new springtime in the soul whether or not it was a tryst or the beginning of an extended engagement.

What is the distinction between these two events, absolutely indistinguishable on the surface?

Of course, to a certain extent, the answer must be specific to the context of the interaction. The "context" is merely the environment, the factors that play into creating a mood and state of mind that we find pleasurable. However "context" also includes elements like ideas, emotions, our past histories, and all of the minutiae that make up the subtext of our everyday reactions. So we can see the distinction between good and bad sex is subjective, and thus in no way moralistic. Well and good, but none of this does a whole lot to answer our question.

There is an organic dimension as well, and this may tell us more. Though the Kama Sutra puts a great deal of attention into the more physical side of this, how lovers can be trained to give each other more

pleasure, a more crucial, and subtle element that leads us to match or mismatch is electro-chemical. This of course includes the electro-chemistry of our brains, but as you explore this in *practice* (and as we will later see), the fact that consciousness is a field is part and parcel of the boundless bliss that some experience through sexual contact with others. Many relate experiences of unity, lack of a sense of anything but Self, the slowing or even stopping of time, and many other things which we associate both with religious experience and the pre-formative stage of human development before Self and Other is clearly demarcated. During this stage, magical thinking has also been largely untouched by cultural boundaries and definitions.

This is what we are hunting for, and why there is any sense in speaking of "sex magick" at all. I have experienced "it" many times myself, so I'm not going off what I've read in books here. At the same time I can honestly say I'm still trying to piece together exactly what "it" is.

A dissatisfying experience results when there is no transition of energy on both sides. There is harmonic dissonance between the "fields" of the participants. When there is harmonic congruence, and these flood gates *do* open, there is an active interplay in both directions like the Taoist yin-yang symbol which leaves each participant forever changed, touched in part by the divine presence of the Other, whether the event was the beginning of a long relationship or a so-called one-night-stand.

So we're driven to have this experience, yet many personal and cultural factors block us from this bliss which is our birthright.

How do we begin?

There are many pieces to this puzzle which some may consider more 'down to earth,' so let's begin there. The simple intent to be there with the Other, respect them, and recognize them for what they are, begins opening up these channels of energetic communication.

We also have expectations of what is or is not satisfying. To one person it might be so simple as "the harder the better," in which case if they are paired with someone who has a very different expectation, the encounter will result in almost certain disaster. These expectations are consciously controllable -- a great deal more than the context often is -- and this is one of the fulcrums for actually making the encounter mutually enjoyable. Thus "intent" may be a more accurate word to use.

They say the way to Hell is paved with good intent. Who knows, maybe it is. But the first difference between these two hypothetical situations, one "bad," one "good," comes simply from these intentions going into it, how the "bodies" (physical, energetic, emotional, and so on) of the people involved happen to interact with one another. Most of this occurs on a non-verbal level, and for most people it generally occurs without a great deal of conscious awareness. This is probably one of the reasons that "love" can seem to strike from out of nowhere with the force

and ferocity of a freight train. A hell of a lot can happen behind and under that glance which results in "love at first sight." A moment may as well be an eternity.

The difference between heaven and hell, once you've set your sights, are the things that "block it" from manifesting (I know I used it as an example but we're really not just talking about sex, we're talking about the alignment of your psyche and your body).

It may seem peculiar to you that the blocks within your spine, or the flexibility of your tendons has anything to do with your intention of manifesting enough money to get from California to New York, or of really enjoying physical contact with your partner, but it is all linked, at least metaphorically. And the practices you use to "let go" of your muscular blocks are just as effective when applied to emotional blocks. In fact, the energetic and muscular blocks within your body need to be dissolved; they are manifestations of corresponding psychological blocks. It works both ways, who can say which came first. If nothing is holding you up, you're light as a feather.

There's an easy litmus test for this, which I find I have to return to quite frequently. If you think you have something to hold on to, remember that everything you own, and everyone you know, will be pulled away, torn apart into their base parts by the tidal wave of time. Like the Pink Floyd song, everything you say, do, create, or destroy, will be pulled out into the deep, dark sea. Does this thought make you depressed? If so, you're holding on. One of my teachers had a saying which he returned to often. He said: *In success, invest in loss. In failure, invest in loss.* It is a Taoist sentiment with Buddhist overtones, but I think it has value outside those ideological contexts.

There are subtle ways of making the "climate," the situation or context, ripe for harvest. You can start inside yourself, with the aspects you have direct control over.

In truth, we oftentimes have little control over the contexts or environments we live within. This may seem diametrically opposed to the Magickal worldview, however recognizing and accepting an impasse can oftentimes be the first step towards regaining control of the situation. You may be primed for the ball game but you can't control the weather. If your environment isn't congruent with your best interests, it is more likely that you will be miserable, rather than change all of those variables. If there are changes you can make to bring yourself in accord with that context, that is one possible solution. Another is to find a situation that is more congruent with who you are. Cacti generally don't flourish in a rain forest. Know thyself.

One shift that often yields desired results is to change emphasis from *doing* to *being*. In the realm of business this shift can often result in disaster, but when it comes to love, the opposite is true. I'd like to provide a

tangential thought on this subject, because I think it is relevant to the conversation at hand, if laterally rather than vertically. While presenting at Alex Grey's Chapel of Sacred Mirrors with other authors from Generation Hex, one member of the audience asked why so many Magickians – people who define themselves as such – tend to be poor. Many answers were given, and in this case I didn't give my opinion, partially because I pretty much agreed with what Jason Louv had to say on the subject. However I would have footnoted that one *is* an artist or a magickian even when not actively painting, or writing, or meditating in front of an altar. The qualities that are valued there are in my opinion diametrically opposed to those which result from being a banker—though clearly a Magickian can do banking, and a banker can do magick. Though the Magus is generally thought of as a Mercurial trickster who can change guises in an instant, to suit his environment, most of the Magickians I have met, myself included, are at the same time deeply committed to a congruence of thought, action, and principle which oftentimes precludes the games that many societies demand for the accumulation of wealth.

The variety of contexts life can give you vary so much that guidelines have to be similarly fluid. This, by the way, may be why we call it "magick." The science and art of causing change in conformity with Will. Like the Olympic gymnast performing incredibly complicated actions seemingly effortlessly, to us the results may appear supernatural. However there is a method to it. The principles involved are consistent, and thus can be observed, tested, and improved upon. The involved principles, in the case of sex magick, are primarily psychological and energetic.

Before we can deal with these issues however there is a cultural barrier which must be dealt with, whether or not the end result is capitulation or transgression. As you begin exploring your cultural heritage, you will also have to take steps back into your own past, quite likely straying into places you would rather never return to.

If All Began In Middle School.

Any exploration of your sexuality will likely lead you to question, and conflict, with the taboos of the society you live within. It is undeniable that these taboos effect your beliefs, and behavior. Your ideas of identity, and of how you fit into the culture around you, are written out of these beliefs.

Some guidelines on this subject can save you a lot of trouble.

Ritual, eroticism, and violence have been linked through all of human history. Most Gods or Goddesses of sex are also deities of death or war. Consider the initiation rites of certain tribes in New Guinea, where the young males have their first coming-of-age sexual encounter with a sacrificial virgin. When the last male is there with her, in full embrace, the two are crushed to death by tons of logs, immediately pulled from the

rubble and eaten. This is obviously a rather extreme version of what we see in the Catholic communion service. However, as deplorable as we may find it, it is hard to deny that this ritual retains its overwhelming significance, whereas the Catholic mass, to many, is just a series of empty words, some weak wine, and stale wafers.

Aggression often finds its outlet in sex or the representation of violence. Esoteric connections between sex and death aside, you can easily trace this directly back to power structures within the social games we invent.

This 'game' is also a product of our new conception of sex as commodity:

...This powerful new type of myth has assumed an unexpected form: advertising and consumerism, forms of proselytizing far more pervasive in our society than Christian doctrine was during the Middle Ages. And, like all the mythologies of past ages, it provides a framework which determines many of the rules and fashions governing human sexual behavior... This commercialization of desire both tries to satisfy an insatiable demand and is extremely profitable. The process is circular. The romantic tradition is already established in these forms serve to satisfy an existing appetite. At the same time the perpetual depicting of romance stimulates the appetite for more. (Jamake Highwater, 1991)

This a key point. We will deal with the topic of mythology and sexuality in consumer culture in many different guises as we progress.

It is patently untrue that there is some underlying "human morality," wherein, for instance, murder has never been sanctioned by the predominant mythology. Even a cursory study of anthropology will demonstrate this. Pharaohs were expected to have sex with their sisters (Hillbillies rejoice!). Rape, murder, even in rare instances patricide, are all acceptable in certain cultures, under certain contexts. As a matter of fact murder is sanctioned by our own cultural mythology - so long as it is done under the banner of War.

Every culture also has taboos, and many individuals inside that culture, when they first come to awareness outside the confines of their culture, do so through intentional transgressions which are done with this exterior, so-called "Left handed," quest in mind. However there is no inherent virtue in this path either, bounded as it is by the same laws of acceptance and transgression. Taboos are requisite for cultures to maintain their integrity. The content of the taboo, however, is completely arbitrary in any universal sense.

Christian society has developed quite a complicated and

subversive gauntlet of taboos regarding sexuality. Not that sexual taboo is distinctly Christian, however the particular set of taboos we generally deal with in American society are distinctly Christian. Ideas of morality and sex are so tangled together that it may be difficult for us to even tell which inclinations are natural and which come about as a reaction of one kind or another to absurd tribal superstitions surrounding reproduction. I assume, if you're reading this book, that you probably don't consider yourself a modern Christian. But how many of us make some of our decisions as a reaction to the Christian moral yardstick?

It is no secret that possession, jealousy, control and dominance all seem to spring from the same source. These social games develop as we move from childhood and psychic dependence to individuality. The roles projected within one phase are merely transposed within the next. The same goes for boundaries, even if the transference is by way of polarization, such as normally happens through the adolescent period.

This period probably began for you in Middle School. Ideas about how you fit in with others begin here; for many of us, they end here as well. For my part, I have always considered myself a maverick. I've always done things "my way," even to the detriment of my social well being. In Middle school, kids vying for the "top dog" position would beat the living hell out of others who didn't wear the "right" brand of sneakers, who didn't parrot the "right" phrases. My reaction was to fade into the woodwork, read, write, and draw. I played the game by actively not playing the game. By high school I had become some kind of de facto leader of the outcasts. Those of you who have read Join My Cult! know how that turned out... Here I am almost two decades later, yet in terms of core identity, how much has really changed?

The "game" is decidedly different between the genders, but regardless the outcome is generally enforced by the political mechanisms of a pecking order or wolf pack. "Who's on top?"

In our case, being the product of a culture that is obviously highly sexually repressed and aggravated, (pick up a copy of any popular magazine some time), aggression is subverted alongside the sexual urge. When the sexual block is released, so too may be the aggressive block.

Jamake Highwater discusses this connection in the final chapter of his book Myth and Sexuality (1991),

The mythology of masculinity... is built upon a mentality which is an implicit aspect of the disillusionment of America's consumer society at the close of the twentieth century. In the competitive decades since the Industrial Revolution, when the human body became a machine, many men have been transformed into lethal weapons by unrealized expectation. For them sex is no longer erotic. It has become a

pornography, a sexual commodity, a mechanism that, failing the obtainment of quick pleasure, takes out its frustration and rage by producing humiliation.

Finding what really works for you takes quite some trial and error, as well as flexibility (Possibly literally). It will most definitely require complete honesty on your part with yourself and those you love, as you should expect no less from them.

Throughout our lives many of us have had an ego-serving program of desire and fear ingrained in us through our sexuality. This occurs throughout childhood and adolescence. For some it ends here, with the first imprint, remaining the same throughout the rest of adulthood. Others choose to consciously expand their ingrained inclinations, or imprint others.

The rules of the 'in group' and 'out group' are one of the many principles by which we all collectively brainwash each other into whatever cultural taboos and trends we want to associate with the mythic crisis points of sexual maturation, sexual relations, and pregnancy. We are valued or shamed based on how we fit into the cultic sexual environment we grow up in, and develop various complexes as a result. The way that we answer these questions for ourselves ultimately creates the myth for our own children.

The only rule is that there are no rules. The norms you have been handed by your culture, whatever it is, may not in any way apply to your own temperament. This is true across the board, not just in terms of sexuality, even though sexuality is the root of ones psychological, physical, and ultimately spiritual being. A taint there, usually formed through years or even decades of repression, sublimation, and transference, will show all the way through. Many so-called deviant urges, if caught early enough, can be re-directed in more acceptable ways, both socially and personally, while still satisfying the same psychological needs. However once an inclination such as pedophilia has worked itself through a persons entire psychology, you may as well ask the person in question to grow wings and fly away.

Many consider this so-called witches-brew another part of human nature and accept the tribal beliefs handed to them without question or investigation. Questioning everything - at least everything that doesn't sit right with me - has always been a part of my nature. All I can really do is espouse the "if you're falling, jump" attitude. Coming to know who you are is really the only knowledge you can ever hope to have. At least early in this experimentation, it is difficult if not impossible to step away from your situational programming without temporarily breaking taboos. Nevertheless, gradual change is more likely to give you healthy, organic and lasting results, as forcing anything psychologically or physically is

subject to the law of compensation. You can't really know where you stand until you step out of yourself and let go of everything you believe in.

Let me emphasize, however, the distinction between acting out and letting go of preconceptions. This takes maturity and courage. Social boundaries must be removed to reveal what your natural boundaries really are. All beliefs must be questioned through tumultuous action. Who you were when you chose a belief may not be who you are now. When you are satisfied in your knowledge, complacent with your status, you cannot learn. To live and learn we must always - first and foremost - remember to change with the changes. What worked yesterday may not serve quite so well for you tomorrow.

Freedom may be attained through the destruction and replacement of those taboos or societally created psychosexual programs: freedom to have an active choice in who you are, how you process information, and what you want from the experience of being alive. There are no rules, only guiding principles.

Knowing that you have the freedom and the right to experience pleasure, in whatsoever way you choose -- so long as you are not hindering anyone else's right to the same through doing it -- is certainly one of the first steps in recognizing "there is no God but man," as well as "Love is the law; love under Will." Both of these are Thelemic buzz-phrases which I think actually have the greatest impact when taken out of context.

Short of proposing some kind of *enforced* free-love utopia, which seems to me almost as nightmarish as our present condition of cultural sexual psychosis, we can at least expect to become more complete individuals from learning what sex is and means to us entirely apart from the "benefit" of cultural-religious ideology or categories be they hetero-, homo-, bi-, or even poly-. These categories, like genres of music, may begin as the new herald of some revolution, but before too long it's \$19.95 on the shelf at Hot Topic. Once something has been pinned down to such a degree, it can be sold. Some tout piercing and tattooing as a rebirth of tribal initiation ceremonies, yet at the same time insecure teenie-boppers are biting their lips over their first belly-button piercing. As un-PC as this may be, "gay pride" parades and the like do more harm than good in a way by creating an even broader gap of definition. Though they may unite those who already feel and believe the same by having a flag or cultural identity to rally under, they actually create a greater partisan atmosphere, and may alienate those who are sitting on the fence.

The key point is not that we are gay, or black, or straight, or homosexual, but that we're *all human*. Granted there are times when people are discriminated against for 'being what they are', but then, when turning the other cheek doesn't work and it is all out warfare, a nice

dose of fox lure² in someone's car ventilation system will do fine.

It's hopeless trying to change the mind of someone who hates you for who you are, since their hatred is generally pointed at an estranged part of their own psyche. If you can't beat 'em, taunt 'em mercilessly. There's no point arguing. The root of any belief is emotional, not intellectual. Logic, if it is applied to a belief at all, is just applied after the fact to rationalize what someone already believes. If you don't believe me, try to use logic to convince a Baptist to accept Osiris as a "mythic symbol" with as much validity as Jesus.

Personally I see no point in defining myself with a trend, or going the other way and holding back on what I want to do because it might put me in the same "category" as the vast majority who are missing the boat by my estimation. Maybe I'm missing the boat too, or maybe I'm trying to sell you something. Think for yourself.

I AM AMERIKKA'S FAVORITE SOFT DRINK.

The power of sexual energy isn't overlooked within our modern Ad cult. This basic principle or "lever" rules the cover of Maxim. For most, the very concept of sex, a thing which can be shaped and molded through societal reinforcement and taboo, causes a physiological reflex which can be used to excite you about things that you wouldn't otherwise be excited about. This "lever" may even operate on a level that you are not at all conscious of. This "sexual power" can be "magickally" transferred through association.

For instance, if you see a beautiful woman covered in sweat, moaning orgasmically and drinking a Coke, then for many the psychological transference is immediate. No advertiser in their right mind thinks that you will consciously believe you will get hot women if you drink coke, but all of them bank on your immediate, visceral response. This branded identity that they are trying to build for you is a myth every bit as much as the Ramayana or Bhagavad-Gita. As an example there is a transference of the previous mentioned "mana" or sexual vitality upon the almighty Brand itself. This is based on one of the most primal Magickal beliefs, evident in many so-called "primitive" societies as well as the thought processes of young children—that something such as vital power or sexual attractiveness can be transferred via association, or even mere proximity. Many other aspects of "magickal thinking" are utilized within advertisements, as a matter of fact, introductory books on advertising (inadvertently?) reference concepts from Frazier's Golden Bough as often as introductory occult or anthropology books do.

² Fox lure is just what it sounds like: a scent compound used to lure foxes, often made from concentrated fox urine. It creates a horrible stench that's just about impossible to remove.

One predominant myth that still remains an undertone within American culture is that sex is both sacrosanct and dirty, profane and yet representative of the highest saccharine ideals, sold as a commodity and beyond value. This oxymoronic sexual code results in an incredibly polarized moral and social standard that in many ways ultimately supports deceit, snickers bars, and animal husbandry. A man's very dignity rests on his ability to ensnare young damsels and yet simultaneously remain virtuous to an ideal, and the women mercilessly peck at each other and preen themselves vying to be the most valuable prize.

In this dramatization, monogamy is a contract not of trust but of control, and the power games of deceit become the top priority in a relationship. (No animals were harmed in the writing of this sentence.)

Living without identity crutches like what kind of clothes you wear, what kind of music you like to listen to, or how you like to get off is hard. Being able to relax is an acquired skill. It's not something that you "get," and then it's over with. I have found this place many times in my life, and have been lured back into the whirlwind by one attachment or another.

You must extricate yourselves from socially learned concepts of what is 'sexy' by taking a look at what immediately pleases you, of where you could have gotten this idea, and if you like or don't like the effects this desire has had on your lives. If it is something that you don't entirely like, what I would recommend is not to beat yourself up about it or try to force a change, but merely to think of how you could explore this in a way that you enjoy more, which ultimately is more healthy for you and your partner(s). This is a very personal process, and one which is prone to make you take harsh looks at other people long before you can suffer those same glances inward. What I am talking about here is honestly assessing what it is that you desire, what that says about you as a whole, and, should you desire, where you got these ideas. No matter the decisions you come to, this exploration always bears fruit.

It may seem that this practice is easier than the ascetic, monastic approach, however this is not so. It is hard to plunge into the uncharted wilderness without any categories. Oftentimes, the more you become like you, the less you become like everyone else. This will terrify some people, and make many others vaguely uncomfortable for reasons they can't entirely fathom.

The monastic life is designed to aid you in this quest by stilling or quelling most of the aspects of life that can be so disquieting. To do this successfully, and live within the world, you must find stillness in motion. This energy -- formerly directed towards fruitless ego-related clutching -- turns outwards and bears witness rather than seeking to possess. This is what helps bring your energy into harmony with your environment: not "holding in," that is not allowing yourself to breathe out, or "holding out" and not allowing yourself to breathe in.

Just remember, when life is at its best, *and* when it is at its worst – *invest in loss.*

Beyond Good And Evil.

It should be obvious to any student of psychology that the worst way to remove a block is to overcharge it, to “attack it.” Like in any other yogic practice, stretching is a process of relaxing.

One should never experience pain from forcing. These shields are up for a reason, so just turning them off and opening up to whatever comes your way without conscious awareness and respect for your own “edges” or boundaries and those of your partner(s) is dangerous and unhealthy.

Sex can be one of the most effective ways to start dissolving your psychological and physical blocks. Looking at what we hold on to, what turns us on, what turns us off, and turning these into psychological benefits or boons rather than crutches or vices is the name of the game. This doesn't necessarily mean that we should all start fucking like rabbits and call ourselves Magickians (Though “they” can be a fun lot nevertheless! Just don't let them on your new rugs.).

At the same time, taboos and psychological blocks don't exist without a reason. They are counterbalances for hidden or repressed energies, which Carl Jung referred to as the Shadow.³ These must be integrated for an individual to become whole, and this integration, clearly, is one of the principle functions of magick, mythology, and religion, (as previously defined.) This makes sex magick, and role-playing within that context, both very powerful and potentially very dangerous. When these fantasies are pursued as knee-jerk responses, without any recognition of the underlying cause, you can easily drive yourself from neurosis to full-blown psychosis.

For example, nymphomania is as much a psychic “counterbalance” as prudishness or frigidity. Something in the subconscious is “weighted” so heavily in one direction that your actions on the conscious side are extreme, in an effort to bring stability. Similarly nymphomaniacs, by definition, don't get much pleasure from the actual act of sex. This is because they're blocked off from the energetic interaction which they so desperately crave. When it comes down to the

³ [The Shadow is an idea representing a part of the unconscious, close to our consciousness but invisible to it, that contains all the discarded, ignored, or disagreeable elements of a persons identity. It can still exert a strong influence on the conscious mind, usually made stronger the harder we try to blot it out. According to Jung's ideas on the subject, one of the goals of psychoanalysis is to functionally integrate the Shadow into the whole Self.](#)

question of “how much is too much?” really only we can determine that. The best gauge for that is simply: am I happy?

Because sex is naturally such an intense experience, we oftentimes develop methods of “shielding” ourselves from the potential brilliance of that moment by rushing. Suddenly sex becomes a horrifying relay race. If you do find yourself hitting one of these 'edges,' it can be easy to recognize it for what it is. I'm not talking about an occasional quickie here. What I'm talking about is the sadly high percentage of women age 21 and below that have yet to have an orgasm despite the fact that they have a drunken encounter at least three times a week. Take your time!

Any fetish or fantasy can be easily psychoanalyzed, and explored with great benefit once it has been understood for what it is. For instance, a fantasy involving being bound, or dead, is on the surface focused around giving absolute power to the Other. More crucially, in these cases it revolves around making your self an Other to your self; the arousal is often voyeuristic regarding what is being done to yourself as an Other. This is commonly a psychological counterbalance for a time in the past when the individual actually had no control. We then often attempt to play act the scenario in a way which gives us control through transference, even if we must put ourselves in a situation externally resembling the event which created the imprint. Of course a physical rape is hardly necessary for the formation of such a fantasy.

Another person might have a similar inclination, but it is the result of wanting to be forced to do things that they actually want to do, but can't allow themselves to. In other words those unspeakable desires are transferred onto another who “forces” the conscious mind to capitulate. Such things are very specific and contextual, as these example demonstrate.

The key to removing blocks is dissolving them...focusing attention on them, actually asking them to present their concerns to you, and slowly learning to relax through them, much like stretching. In practice this sometimes means actually re-creating the cause of the block in a controlled way. There is no hard and fast rule for what key will fit your lock.

There is an analogy here that I'd like to pull from my experience of internal martial arts.⁴ There is an exercise commonly practiced in forms such as Tai Chi, Bagua, and Xingyi, called “push hands.” Two or more partners take on a relaxed, balanced posture, make physical contact in any number of ways, and begin flowing back and forth, focusing their attention on a number of variables, such as the distribution of ones weight, the integration of all the tendons, ligaments and bones in ones body, the energetic give and take between you and your partner(s), and ultimately, the same factors in the other persons body. A well trained

individual can sense the distribution of weight, and skeletal, muscular, and energetic blocks in a person's body just through a light touch.

Though this is generally practiced using little physical force, at least during the first couple years of practice, it teaches many valuable lessons, martial and otherwise. If while moving one of your muscles or joints locks up, that "break" could be utilized by your partner to knock you off. One of the first lessons is learning to "dissolve" these breaks, and integrate the various systems of the body into harmony.

For the most part actually yielding to someone's force, while guiding it into particular channels, keeps you in a position of control. If you match force with force, you've often lost. When muscles contract, they also lock. Blood and chi don't flow well through contracted muscles, and that is something a trained opponent can easily use against you. If an opponent advances forcefully, yielding by rolling to the side keeps you in a tactically superior position; they wind up overcommitted, and you wind up facing their undefended side.

The same is true in all energetic dynamics—sexual, social, or otherwise. Hopefully in most cases an adversarial mentality isn't necessary, but the philosophy of awareness, yielding, and thus avoiding conflicts while retaining the upper hand may prove very useful to you. Similarly, the impulse or intention which lies beneath our violent impulses, or sublimated desire to have violence enacted upon us, can and probably should be a part of this dissolving process. Underneath any given emotion is an intention, like an onion these layers can be stripped off, and more often than not at their core lies a positive impulse. For example, underneath the desire to lash out may be a feeling of helplessness, underneath that lies the desire to be praised, underneath that lies the fear of being anonymous, or completely alone in the world; in this way, underneath a forty year old man beating his wife may be a four year old boy, simply asking for recognition. These things have a habit of festering and growing with time, so the sooner those trapped or pent up energies can be re-directed, the better.

Where's The Beef?

Following this are some general guidelines for beginning your exploration. Your mileage will likely vary.

Much recent sex magick literature focuses on the importance of de-sexualizing sex, so as to unravel the cultural obsession. There's value in this, but the practices provided don't generally strike at the personal, psychological nature of sexual obsession. They also tend to be boring, which is the last thing sex should ever be. It is true that a certain kind of patience is required that you might not normally exercise in the bedroom, living room floor, or elevator, however you don't have to do deep

breathing exercises for twelve hours on a bed of roses to practice sex magick. Do it on a pile of cactus with a herd of cattle if you like. The distinction is in your energy, in your intent, and in your attitude. Note however -- and this cannot be under stressed -- if you aren't intending the growth and enjoyment of those you're participating with, then you're pissing in your drinking water, since you're going to be alchemically mixing your energies with theirs. Even if altruism isn't your game, that's just bad business.

Once we begin to dissolve blocks, we can also develop heightened focus and experiment with sigils and other visualization techniques.

The activity of visualizing symbols, associating an intent with it, and "firing" during sexual activity clearly develops your focus, just as bicycling and juggling at the same time would. In a nutshell, the practice of sigilization allows us to focus an intent and link it physiologically to the "anchor" of the zero-state of orgasm. The rule given by Peter Carroll regarding sigils is "fire and forget." (This has may have a slightly different connotation within the context of sex magick, but efficacy is unperturbed by the fact.)

"Dissolving" is the real trick, and where most of the work has to be done. In my experience the other techniques of sex magick are fairly rudimentary by comparison.

For instance, one naturally may progress from associating certain concepts with sigils, scrambling the meaning, and then firing them off during orgasm to extended fantasies involving entities or people that may or may not be present, and may or may not exist. This process may begin much like the daydreams one commonly associates with masturbation, but given enough focus, and enough of that electro-chemical energy, they begin taking on a life of their own. There is an extended tradition within Indian magick of creating Tulpas – that is, aetheric or astral partners for sex magick workings – and similar "myths" and practices exist within many other cultures as well.

Basic Alchemy

The first method is creative. It is practiced through partner coupling, traditionally male and female, though again in this practice gender refers to role, rather than biology. The male serves as an emissary from the eternal as the masculine archetypical principle, the woman is the same. In some practices this is changed somewhat, where the woman appears as the goddess, and the male serves as he is-- singular and mortal. This practice aims at bringing about the experience of 'eternal love': the man being One as all men, the female One as all women, and through the union of these eternal principles results One: the unfolding of that universal

will unto itself, self-fulfilling and fulfilled. Almost all of the unveiling of Nuit in Crowley's *The Book of the Law* can be seen as a poetic expression of this.

To begin building this energy, once you have found compatible partner(s) with similar intentions is to consciously 'amplify' each experience that you are having, and continue to patiently expand this threshold with every breath, and every second. Those of you who have experimented with MDMA may recognize the feeling as virtually indistinguishable from "rolling." This languorousness can be amplified almost limitlessly. We have more ability to consciously heighten or deaden our tactile sense than many of us realize. As chemicals such as MDMA release neurotransmitters already present in the brain, it comes as no surprise that you can in fact feel a little "burnt out" immediately the next day. However this effect is generally a great deal more mild, and easier to do away with, than the after-effects of hallucinogens. As you are amplifying this experience, pretty soon you will realize that what you are playing with is a sensation of energy. These energy fields can expand, contract, or change in almost any other manner we can conceive of.

In a more practical sense, singular orgasm is not the goal, though the Chinese obsession with limiting ejaculation based on a man's age may be overkill. The experience is somewhat like riding waves, one picks you up and carries you along, but before it comes crashing down you back off, and paddle on over to another. As you learn to "merge fields" with your partner you may start to experience some very unusual phenomena. These may present themselves as intense sensory hallucinations, or even verifiably swapping of sensory data with your partner(s). The first time this happened to me I was "practicing" with a small group of the female persuasion when suddenly it became impossible for any of us to tell whose leg or arm was whose. This was followed by flashes of light and sound, and eventually a sensation of complete and indescribable unity. Not a bad Saturday night, all in all.

As you gain familiarity and experiment with this "field merging" you may want to introduce others to the fun. For whatever reason, in my experience, this tends to bring about similar emotions as single couple alchemy, however it is often more intense, more protracted, and there is often the distinct feeling that the unity is in fact an annihilation. Individuality is blotted out, the ego is blotted out, there is only the self aware night or naught.

When the walls come tumbling down, distinctions are broken and the energy body of all participants becomes one. Many who have experimented with this relate the perception of being one organism with many limbs. The love of the group, unrestricted by fetters is Agape, not Eros.

All the same, in terms of intent or practice this has nothing in common with a frat-party fuck-a-thon. One of the first signs of success in

either practice is that rather quickly a surprisingly small amount of physical stimulation is required, though of course this doesn't have to be adhered to as a rule. If you need a simple guide, think opium den.

The potential for group sexual practice is astronomical: every person brings with them not just a body but an entire world. A mind stretched by a new idea never returns to its original dimensions.

However there is also an exponential increase in the chance that ego-serving desire or fear take over and the moment is lost in coveting, and delusional fantasies-- which can become quite tangible and dangerous in conjunction with sex magick. Few people are capable of love without the 'thief' known as fear. In this setting, supposing everyone is there fully willingly, there is nothing but the moment. Anything else is poison.

Regardless of the practice(s) you choose, cultivating agape within your group or tribe should be a primary concern to all interested in evolving culturally.

Complete honesty and persistence are the only means of attaining the balance required to take on these practices. Nothing revolutionary is every gained without serious risk. If you chose a life of evolution, you will likely never find rest but you may find freedom.

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