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# The story of O: The history of the female orgasm

In these Rabbit-rampant times, it's hard to imagine that a hundred years ago, reaching your orgasmic peak would have been dismissed as a bout of female hysteria! We look at the female orgasm through the ages

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Here's one for all you fanny fact fans - did you know that the clitoris has 8,000 nerve endings... twice as many as the penis? Course you did. That's a hell of a lot of explosive, pulsating pleasure to be had, as we Superfoxes all know; so why has the real truth about just how much ecstasy a-gal-can-have-horizontally been kept under wraps for so long?



Up until well into the 20th century, many scientists claimed that the female was incapable of enjoying an orgasm at all. In the 1800s, if a woman was displaying signs of sexual excitement, her husband would take her to the doctor so that could treat what was diagnosed as 'hysterical tension'. Symptoms of this 'condition' included irritability, a temperature and swollen pudenda. And guess how the doctors treated these female patients? Masturbation, of course! Result! But... the afflicted lady was not allowed to do this herself, as masturbation was unhealthy and could rot the brain, obviously. This bizarre ritual was performed by a midwife, or the doctor himself (I'm sure that was never mentioned in the Hippocratic oath).

The industrial revolution meant that the 'modern doctor' would deliver the genital stimulation using a steam-driven vibrator. In fact all manner of weird and wonderful contraptions were used to bring about 'the relief of tension in the female'.

Thankfully, our Rampant Rabbit-fuelled times have lightened up. Helped along by Freud and the groundbreaking Kinsey US sexual study in the 1940s, clitoral orgasm is recognised as the engine-room of the female orgasm (oh, and a few years before Kinsey, a certain Dr Grafenburg found a hotspot at the front of the vagina to officially double the fun).

These days, art-house girl porn (directed by women), shows full-blown female erotica that celebrates

women's pleasure and, most importantly, allows them to vocalise it in all its facets; as opposed to the pretty pouting, screaming, girlie moaning stuff of low-rent dirty movies.

In the late Nineties the *Vagina Monologues* busted through taboos and outed all things vaginal; including an entertaining and liberating group rendition of myriad types of orgasm. Beats hands-down that 'I'll have whatever she's having' *When Harry Met Sally* scene. (Lady pleasure on mainstream celluloid is often treated comically. Who can forget the heroine in Mel Brooks' comedy spoof *Young Frankenstein* breaking into operatic song when she makes lerve with da monster?)

When it comes to modern literature, hell, even Mills & Boon are getting in on the act... Replacing coy 'her breasts grew firm inside her poplin blouse' type stuff, M&B are getting down with the dirrrry girrrls and introducing the 'Blaze' range, featuring masturbation, bondage, orgasms in the shower and more.

Going right back, the forbidden subject of female sexual pleasure was dealt with poetically and deftly in DH Lawrence's 1928 scandalous novel, *Lady Chatterley's Lover*:

'Rippling, rippling, rippling like a flapping overlapping of soft flames, soft as feathers, running to points of brilliance, exquisite, exquisite and melting her all molten inside.'

This er, rather flowery description of a woman's intense excitement and orgasmic joy during climax proved to be one of the most shocking elements of the book. It seemed that sexual ecstasy had hitherto been ring-fenced as an entirely male preserve.

Sylvia Plath's poem Ariel, written in 1963, again used beautiful imagery to capture that climactic moment:

'And now I Foam to wheat, a glitter of seas.'

It seems we have to go way back to the 3rd century and to the really laidback and cool eastern folk to disprove the theory that we've always been uptight and dishonest about girls having outrageous fun dans le sack. Oh yes, ma'am, the Kama Sutra had it licked... so to speak.

This ancient Indian text wins hands-down for giving tip-top advice to help your lady get her groove on. It's still pretty unique in the way it discusses sexual pleasure without any hint of shyness or shame. You can learn about "the quivering and shuddering of the Yoni" that proceeds and indicates female orgasm. Throughout, it suggests that female sexuality should not be taken for granted and that men should place their pleasures second to hers. OK – reality check - maybe not second, but at least equal to... I'll leave you with this red-hot bit o' sauce:

Let your tongue rest for a moment  
in the archway to the flower-bowed Lord's temple  
before entering to worship vigorously,  
causing her seed to flow:  
this is Jihva-mardita (the Tongue Massage).

Cor!

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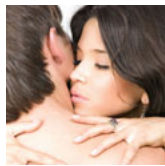
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LOL Mademoiselle, playing with your avatar is weirdly addictive, isn't it? Mine's always getting her...

Posted by *Aestiva...* - 10 Jun 2012 02:28PM

### Re: Favourite summer drink?

A good cold beer! There's nothing that screams summer to me than a nice glass of it after a long walk...

Posted by *Aestiva...* - 10 Jun 2012 02:25PM

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I really don't like them. They all seem to revolve around manipulating the audience, people coming out...

Posted by *Aestiva...* - 10 Jun 2012 02:21PM

### Re: US remakes of UK shows

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Posted by *Aestiva...* -10 Jun 2012 02:17PM

**Re: How do you know if a guy is interested?**

And as for the being able to see others' situations clearer than our own - that's only because our own...

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