

2Fucked 2Furious: still sexually dysfunctional in sex-positive queer scenes

February 25, 2015

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http://twitter.com/fucked_zine

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Introduction

This zine is the follow-up to *FUCKED: on being sexually dysfunctional in sex-positive queer scenes*. When we published *FUCKED* almost a year ago, we had no idea that it would receive such a huge, positive response. At best we thought that a couple of our pals would buy the zine and that maybe our analysis would resonate with at least some people. At worst, we thought that people would say it was a nonissue, and that we were just a bunch of prudes who needed to get laid. Instead, we've sold hundreds of zines all over the world and have received numerous messages from other queers telling us how relatable, moving and important our writings are. Although we're still sad, scared, and frustrated, writing *FUCKED* has helped us to depersonalise our 'dysfunctions' and see them through a systematic, political lens. It feels good to be able to talk publicly about these issues, and in its physical form, the zine has helped us to facilitate many private conversations with friends and partners. It means that there is now something tangible to bring to the table, that the zine can already have part of that discussion on our behalves.

Currently, the zine is being distro'd in Canada, and was (so we hear) all over Copenhagen Queer Festival. We were interviewed for Resonance FM's Very Loose Women show, and also took the zine to the Roles Sexuality and Gender Forum's annual conference in Birmingham. Perhaps one of the best things to come out of the zine has been running discussion groups: we have done four Can't Fuck/Won't Fuck talks to date, in London, Brighton and Sheffield. Doing these workshops and talking to other people who have been struggling with similar issues has been empowering and inspiring, both for us as writers and for those attending. So many people said that this was the first time in their lives they'd had a space to talk about these feelings and realise they weren't alone. When we wrote the first *FUCKED* there was a part of us doubting the truth of what we were saying: when you're dealing with all these negative thoughts it's really easy to convince yourself that your own experiences are invalid/unworthy/not a fair representation of reality. Receiving so many supportive messages from others is not only individually validating but also a measure of the necessity of these dialogues in the communities/spaces/scenes we're part of. We hope that the Can't Fuck/Won't Fuck discussions have gone some way towards starting these conversations and breaking down the harmful normativities that still prevail within queer scenes.

2FUCKED 2FURIOUS is a collection of writings by readers of the first zine, workshop attendees and the original *FUCKED* crew. We wanted to give others the opportunity to speak out about these difficult feelings as there are so many stories and narratives that have been sidelined within sex-positive feminism. Thank you to everyone who has contributed.

If you would like to host a Can't Fuck/Won't Fuck workshop or have any other questions about the zine, do send us an email - the address is on the inside cover.

Anna, Hannah, Kirsty, and Tasha Tristan. February 2015

Content note: these pieces include subjects such as rape, sexual assault and coercion, abusive relationships, disordered eating and mental health issues. The writings reflect internalised homophobia and misogyny.

Where potentially triggering issues are described in any detail, specific content notes have been added to individual pieces.

1.

A lot has changed since I wrote my pieces for the first edition of FUCKED. When we wrote and published the zine, I was very unhappily in love and trying to fix an impossible situation. After going through that, I was seeking validation. I hit up a stranger on the internet (yes, OKStupid). I didn't think I would like him. I just wanted to be with someone who hadn't rejected me (yet).

Of course stuff happened.

It wasn't like the other times I'd fallen for people, usually people I already knew. I'd build up an image of them in my head and fail to see what was really happening. I wanted to impress and forgot that I'm just not able to be that impressive. This person was unexpected, a blank space - I had the opposite of high expectations. I started liking him for what he said and did when we were together, for how good he was to me. We fell in love and everything was (mostly) pretty great actually.

The role sex plays in my life now is quite different from what it was when we compiled the first zine. I know it is available, I have a steady partner. My partner has a high sex drive. Having never before experienced sex in the context of such a committed relationship, I have discovered quite how fluctuating mine is. It goes from insatiable to non-existent sometimes within the same weekend. I don't know how it works, what it wants. I don't know what I like. I struggle to give my partner everything he wants, and I ask myself if it is fair to deny him what he had when he was polyamorous. (He didn't 'quit for me', it just turned out that way and I try to refuse to believe that this makes our relationship less 'radical' somehow. We're pretty rad.)

I often feel physically alienated from my partner and from sex (the kind we have; the kind we could be having; the kind both of us want to be having separately from each other). Often I don't really feel anything at all, and I feel disconnected from my partner's desire. I also struggle with the kind of fucking 'radical queers' should be having. My partner is open-minded, would try most things at least once and likes a bit of kinky stuff. Despite being reassured in the sweetest and most honest way by him that those things are never compulsory, that he doesn't miss them when he's with me, I still feel selfish for being alienated and sad/triggered by some of the things he would like (us) to do. The expectation of gendered behaviour runs so deep that sometimes I look at my sweet, shy, considerate boyfriend and I think that he must be frustrated, that he must resent me, that I will never be physically able to pin him down and fuck him as hard as another could. Even bi-phobic thoughts appear. I ask him what he likes about sex with other men, if he misses it, and I compare myself to the things he says and find myself lacking. Most of all, even though he has never put me under pressure to enjoy myself in ways that are pleasing for him, I still feel inadequate because I almost never come, because I almost never know what I want (if anything).

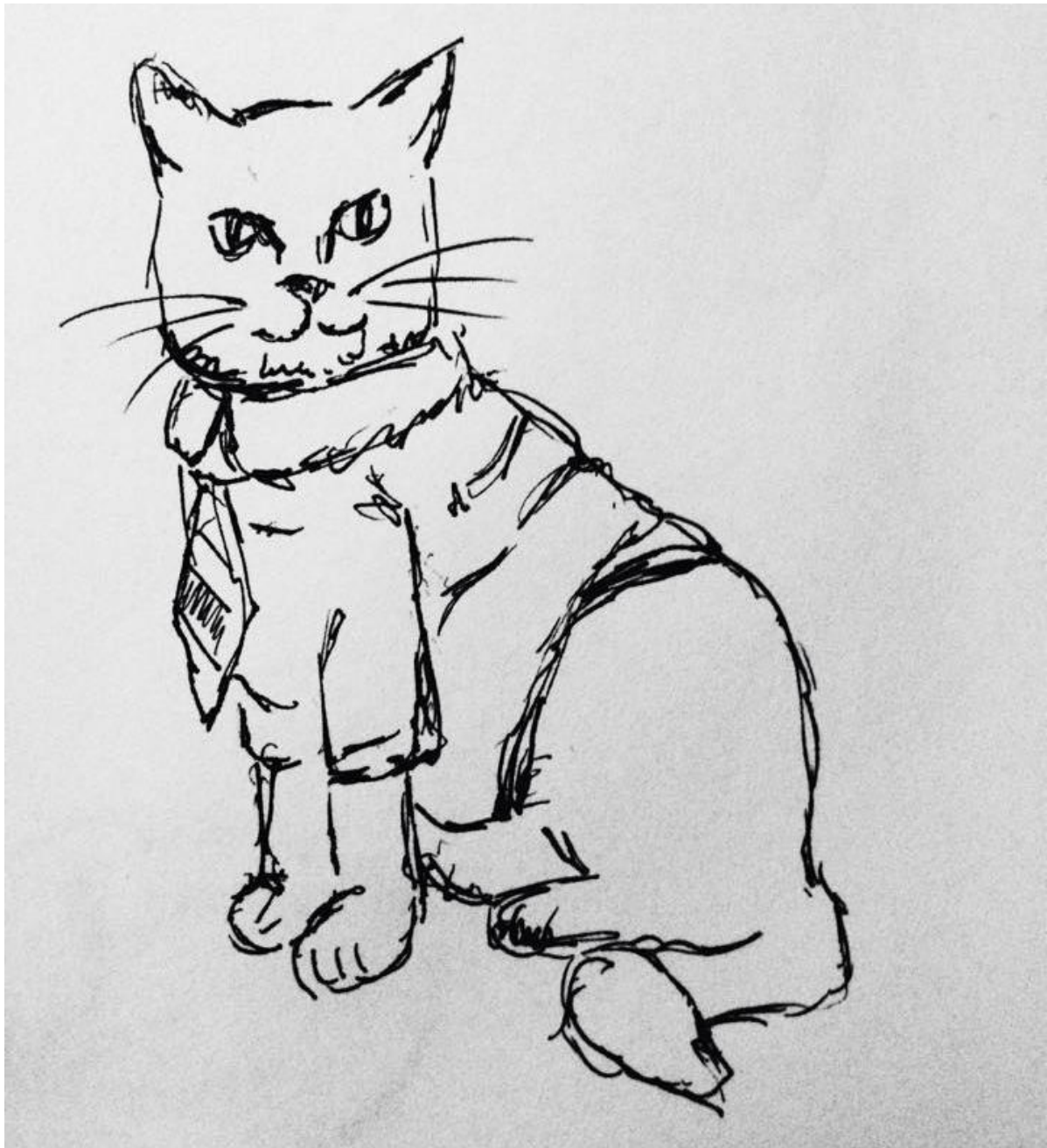
The politics of queer spaces are so deeply bound up with sexuality that it's hard for me to accept my relationship as inherently valid if I'm not doing the 'right' kind of fucking. Sometimes I've felt that being with a cis man can only be validated by presenting in the least 'normative' possible way. It seems so wrong when I reflect on it. I know why my relationship is great, and valid, and I don't really need anyone's approval. My partner makes me feel more secure than I've been at any other time I can remember. But I can't help seeing us through other people's eyes. The high school approach of comparing ourselves to what we think cool kids are like and what they do is especially nonsensical considering that we're both essentially still weirdo nerdy kids.

Then I think, the societal pressure that I imagine from within and from outside our relationship is the same damn thing. I fear being judged by others, as I fear being judged by my partner. Not good

enough, not sexy enough, not open to anything and up for it and ready. Not even ready when I think I might be, sometimes. I am the cop inside my head and I police myself no matter what I do.

On good days, I remember how excited I was when I first fucked him. And it's funny, because we are so gay and so weird and likely too dysfunctional to be mainstream queer. At the same time the kind of intimacy we do have would probably seem extremely strange and alienating to straight people or homonorms.

I don't know if I'll ever stop being crazy, but at least now I can believe there's someone there who wants to hang out with me and make out all the time, even if I don't figure shit out. What is this - I end on a positive note? I don't understand how to do anything adults are supposed to know about (yet?), but I'm less afraid of that now 'cause there's a lovely babe holding my hand.



2.

I turned over to face her, turning the thoughts over and over in my head. I don't love her, I don't even think I'm attracted to her. She's kind, caring and understanding and I enjoy her company. That's ok, for now. But is that ok with her?

Kissing sort of feels nice, but there's no chemistry. No spark. It's just a pleasant sensation, without any excitement, and cuddling is better. It's hard to know, with a low sex drive, whether it's because I don't want sex or I don't want her, or both.

Occasionally I've noticed someone I do fancy though. There's been fireworks, my body reminded of sensations that seemed long lost. Overtaken by desire for a moment, almost being able to let go and actually enjoy it. It's only ever happened a handful of times, making up a tiny proportion of many more lifeless encounters.

More often than not I'd fall into bed, into the comfort of it all, with women like you. What saddens me is that I can see the fire in you. I'm almost jealous of the thrill you experience. Don't I deserve that too? Will it hurt you if I tell you the truth? Will you think I've been leading you on?

I wanted some closeness, intimacy, but I wasn't fussed about fucking. You wanted it though, so I went along with it. I want to please you because I like you, but I'll never, ever initiate it with you!

I gave you what you wanted and it felt empty, like a performance. I didn't feel used, I just felt like I'd been to the gym. A physical act that can be fun, but definitely not erotic. I don't mind, because I'm good at faking it and sometimes, the pretence is as good as it gets.

But now I look back on it, it's a little sad. And I won't be doing it again. Because I feel no pleasure, you feel it all for the both of us.

I don't believe in the radical possibilities of pleasure babe...

The more time passes, the more I find all this sex-positivity stuff annoying. The way we see sexuality as something super cool and feminist and LIBERATORY.

I just think I've stopped believing in this. Regarding fucking - fucking lots, fucking often - as a radical practice ignores a lot of the (big) details. Yes, we actually live in a world where people murder whores, where women who fuck lots of different people get harassed, and everyone's upset because 10-year-old girls wear mini-skirts. On top of this, women - mostly trans and non-white women - are over-sexualized all the time, the lack of sexuality is pathologized, and we are openly coerced to have sex, everywhere, all the time. The problem lies in this conflicting injunction which ensures that we're all losers. So reclaiming sexuality as personal 'empowerment', why not? Praising it as a political practice? It's shit.

The idea is that as long as we live in a patriarchal and capitalist society, all our relationship and sexuality choices will be influenced by sexism. If we choose to fuck a lot of people or if we don't fuck anyone at all, if we do hardcore BDSM, if we only fuck our committed partners, or whatever, in all instances we conform to what is expected of us. If we do not take into account all aspects of the problem we miss the point entirely. We can't win. And when we theorise about who's the most 'deconstructed' person, we forget that we're all in this hell together, and that we're all lost, and we're all fucked anyway. It's like people who say that femininity is not feminist because it conforms to patriarchy's standards, or that monogamy is capitalist. First off, masculinity doesn't seem any less influenced by patriarchy than femininity (but it is much more socially glorified than femininity, yep), and fucking a lot of people is as much consumption as wanting to be monogamous is objectification. Anyway we don't care we're all FUCKED I said.

It's obvious that it's important to process and understand and challenge the injunctions to be chaste and to not fuck that we have had to suffer all our lives, but it's also super important to challenge the

injunctions to be sexual that we hear everywhere (from both misogynist dudebros and queer feminists). We need to stop kidding ourselves for two minutes and be honest: fucking is not revolutionary. Because I hear it - often implied - from the mouths of those around me, that the sex we have is somehow incredible because of our queerness, and that this sex could destroy I-don't-really-know-what (patriarchy, they say). As if abuse, coercion, anxiety, misogyny, transphobia, racism don't exist inside our queer pants. Not fucking a lot, having boring sex or anxiety-ridden sex or unsatisfying sex, being vanilla, not liking to talk about sex: we associate all this with cishets. We then draw out queerness as a matter of sex - a lot of sex. We differentiate ourselves from those prude asexuals, those ugly ones who don't fuck, those bad survivors/victims who don't want to fuck to get better, those annoying people who are too stressed about sex to have it, or who don't want to fuck people they're not intimate with.

Honestly sometimes, apart from the facial piercings, I can't really tell the difference between queer/feminist spaces and straight bars. There are lots of people trying to get laid, there's misogyny all around, and everyone talks about sex as much as possible whilst not caring whether other people want to hear about it or not. We have created a hierarchy that is not so far from what exists outside of our communities, where those with the power are those who fuck, and they have that power because they're fucking and it's made visible that they are. The only people who we accept don't have much sex is straight women, because they only fuck men and we all know how shit it is to fuck men, but hey, it's not always better in our communities.

What might actually make a difference would be if we really analysed our sexuality whilst being critical of it, and took into account the fact that not everyone is comfortable with sex. If we stopped centring our communities around sexuality and stopped believing that what's going on in our bedrooms is somehow revolutionary. If we stopped competing about 'who's the most radical' and stopped blaming others for their lives - which are just as ruined as ours. And maybe someday we'll leave our comfort zones and stop using feminism as an excuse to do what we like (if you like something, you don't need any weird political justifications for it, just do it). We'll try to focus on how to destroy everything, and actually do it (because I'm not entirely sure that we can completely change our perception of sex and sexuality without demolishing everything that surrounds it too, like capitalism), so that we no longer have people telling others how (not) to fuck. In the meantime, instead of condemning 'normative' sex, prudishness, and asexuality, we should try to take care of each other and start waging war against the world as we know it.

3.

content note: rape, disordered eating, violence, drug use, mental health & self-harm

I've been fucked and furious since I was 13. I started having my period before I was even 11, I think? I have a memory of coming up from the bottom of the garden where I had been eating a crepe that overflowing with Nutella. My parents' dinner-party guests stared at me and laughed. I was bad, embarrassing, hilarious: apparently, my entire face was covered in chocolate. It was shaming in a way I understood (like some kind of mini-Eve!) to be about having to be a girl. Before that, like a drag act having fun, I had totally enjoyed some vaguely fucked-up stuff – like being dressed up as a doll and having my hair brushed 100 times by my authoritarian grandmother – while I'd also gathered anxiously, from my mother's anger about it, that it had somehow been a violence against me. But how could it be violence? It was dressing-up. Like lying on top of my friend Stephanie with pillows between our bodies, humping each other to make babies, aged 10. In any case, it was really confusing to realise I was in myself the object of training and violence, and that it was serious and not a game, not like playing with my little brother at being princesses with wands and willies. Certainly I always felt like a fraud in relation to all the real girls I found in school, who I perceived to be authentically living and being the real thing. Mournfully, I had formless, pining, lustful thoughts and breasts and pungently hormonal under-arm tufts and pubes before anybody else my age. I don't think I thought much of weird queer Stephanie, in the end; I think I just wanted to be a real girl, a hot babe, and get fucked by the right boys, the popular ones. What might be far more useful than this exercise: perhaps I should reflect on all the cruelty I might ever have knowingly, unknowingly, meted out.

After 13 years of fucking I have actually stumbled on some cases of sex that conjured a liberation from gender. Luckily I have built up love and ecstasy. Overall I don't think I even *regret* my long and non- illustrious career of rubbing my reluctantly, recalcitrantly, dysphorically gendered body up against the bodies of completely banal men in the vain hope that something of their freedom-from- gender would rub off on me. But mostly, it's been a sorrowful and disappointing road, my rampant history of slutting, because even where it scratched my itch half-decently, there were outrageously high marginal costs. Each time, a massive setback in the battle for self-love. All the same, I've actually no truck, really, with misandry. Not politically. It's fun, as catharsis in safely intelligent contexts, I guess. Billions of men are utterly hateful. But when I let it roar, my misandry seems like the flip-side of the coin of wanting to be them ... of wanting to rape (rape *them*, for starters, but perhaps also some easier proxy targets).

Despite everything, the ugliest thing about heteropatriarchy I've found is certainly my inner misogynist. I want to go back in time and actually beat up, the way I beat up a thousand times in my mind (to the point that I started to say I *had* done it, and believed myself) the guy I was in love with when I was 13. He didn't stop when I said stop while he pushed a cock into my cunt for the first time ever, prior to walking back to school to announce to everyone how 'easy' I had been, and what a slut. I was so devastated and friendless and bullied for so long after this that I was hospitalized with bulimia. People at school refused to countenance that he had done anything wrong, or that I, with my gabby appearance of confidence and strength, could ever be *raped*. I had never thought, or said, that word in relation to what had happened, for almost two years - and what a *melodramatic* word to use. They all thought the relevant point was that, whatever had happened, I had wanted it, I had wanted him. How had I not learned, anyway, that I was a girl? As a girl I should not be surprised to be only barely surviving after having flouted the rules for surviving *as a girl of a very particular (relatively low) fuckable value* in the high school gender discipline boot-camp. My one strategy – trying to become one of the guys by hanging around them and talking daringly knowledgeable misogynous shit about girls – well, that was

only going to work, even in the unreliable, partial way it sometimes could work, if I didn't also fuck up and ask to get fucked *myself*. I thought about getting fucked all the time. Huge error. What about: be a lesbian, to that end? Forget it. I started going out with a girl in the grade above, and promptly had my head banged against a wall, my desk decorated with spit.

A tiny fractional sample from the Getting Fucked list after that... There was the classmate who I allowed to stay over at my parents' house when I was 15, even after an evening where some experimental pot had knocked me into a comatose panic attack, because he was a self-styled unpopular kid and technically my sensitive friend/ally in the face of my bullies. He started fucking me in my sleep. I yelled and forced him out of the house in the freezing cold middle of the night, but I hate that I was able to do this, i.e. really do it and not just in my dreams, because he was socially non-alpha, that is to say, a little weaker and more bullyable like me. There was the decidedly 'alpha' classmate who fucked me in secret and was amazed—amazed and filled with contempt—at my display of 100% fake pleasure: "You ... *like* it!" he said. There was the macho much- older body-builder who asked me, after the perfunctory sex he'd orchestrated, why I had a non-negligible amount of body fat, I mean, was it dietary?—this as he dropped me off in his car and handed me my blooded knickers. Or consider the other, similar, health-fascist protein-powder type who came in my face (my god, never again, I vowed) and took dozens of photos of the bruises the riot cops' batons had inflicted on my thighs. This one also shuddered at my doomed femininity when I said that the fatty skin of a roast chicken was obviously the best part. 'Stop talking', he ordered me. This was also what the much older man who was supposed to be teaching me breathing meditation had said, when he suddenly made it clear he was aggrieved because our sessions together were obviously intended to lead towards sex. Come to think of it, I was equally naive, and eager to accommodate, when another much older man revealed with surprise that he hadn't booked anywhere to sleep for the night in the city he was visiting me in. In my bed, his enormous erect cock prodded insistently at my as-though-paralysed hip-bone for what felt like the entire night, not taking no for an answer.

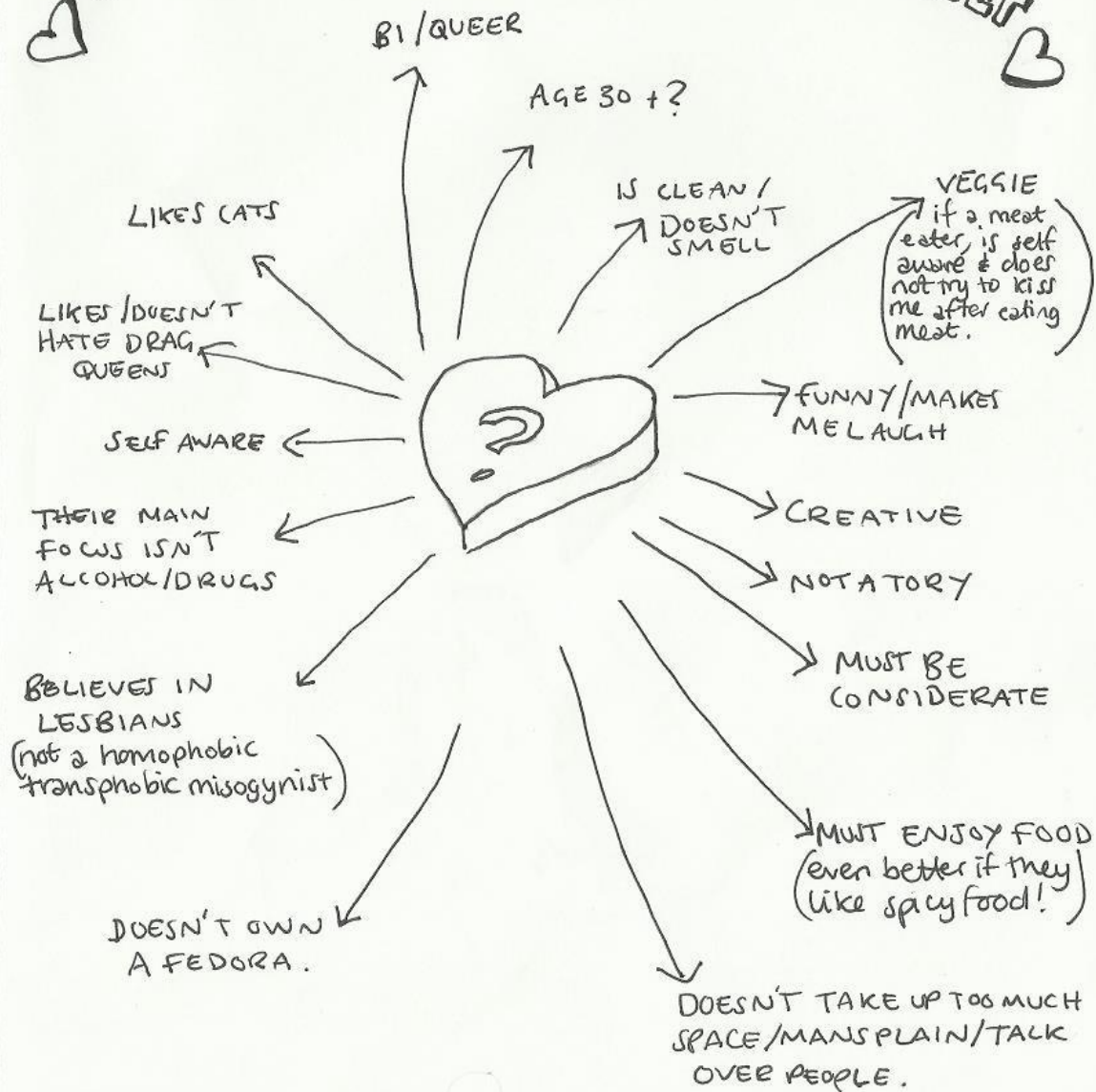
"You have a problem with *sex*!" A memory of my mother - who apologises to me nowadays—too late—about her panic reaction to my too-early sexuality - seizing me by my elbow and hissing these words. Ironically this particular scene was about whatever she thought was happening with the one boy there had never been any need for me to hide. The only one who was my real friend. This friend would never touch me and it was unthinkable to touch him. 10 years later, though, I met up with the grown-up version of this exception, this true friend, and saw *Once Upon a Time in America* on a huge screen. Afterwards, discussing the aestheticized horror of De Niro raping Elizabeth McGovern, he said with gleaming eyes full of enthusiasm: "*but you can really understand why he does it, can't you!*" At this, I experienced lasting shell-shock. *Et tu?* I thought. I don't trust him anymore. And I ask my mother: can anybody *not* 'have a problem with sex' under these conditions?

I want to take back from *all* these men my cunt, and even my withholding the possibility of my cunt. I want to take back my apologetic complicity with their entitlement to it, or, their abstention from it as good guys. I want to take back my abject gratitude, my easy hurtiness, my smiles, my co-operative self-loathing. And to expropriate all the horrible men I have ever given these things to. Actually, those aren't the main things I want to take back off them. They kind of aren't a big deal. What I want to take back is the compliment I paid them - them, in particular, instead of the comrades I might otherwise have found - by expecting togetherness, reflexivity, and respect in all the wrong bodies. My emotionally high-labouring self-harm was practically counter-revolutionary, when I expected from such horrible men the ability and the desire to (even just fleetingly) become-human on a level with me. When I invited them to try. So I want to take back that enormous queer-utopian compliment, my trust, my giving them the benefit of the doubt. And take back my wonderfulness, my smartness, my vulnerability, my funniness, basically, all the embryonic wisps of mutual becoming, that could have been potentialized by my awesome love, and which they profited from. All the good I did them and all the strength I brought them, by looking into them while they used me, and seeing humanity, seeing pain, seeing humour. Fuck that! FUCK that I gave them that. They owe me the world.

My fury still chokes me sometimes. But on the plus side, nowadays, I mostly seem to help myself and inspire others not do things they don't want to do - like fuck, or not fuck, or be a girl in earnest.



MY ACTUAL IDEAL PARTNER



(SIGH)

4. November

content note: disordered eating

And the moment you know you really shouldn't be there is the moment you think "oh, is he trying to make me cum?", and you're surprised but then you remember that the whole point of this is meant to be pleasure, but really you're mostly going through the motions and gasping in all the right places and biting your lip and wriggling your hips *just so...* - but it's a performance and you should know better and it's not like he's making you and he's checking in but you keep going and you're thinking why am I here? What am I trying to prove? That I can still do this - go home with someone on the first date and display my body and not care and try to claw back some pride in my flawed nakedness which I've been beating myself up about endlessly for years and years and fucking decades and throwing up my food because I'm too fucking exhausted to have the discipline to diet and restrict and plan when I know that it's all fucking pointless when I don't like what I see at 7 pounds lighter, 7 pounds heavier - it's all the same. So I'm stoned and naked and trying to fool us both, because I can.

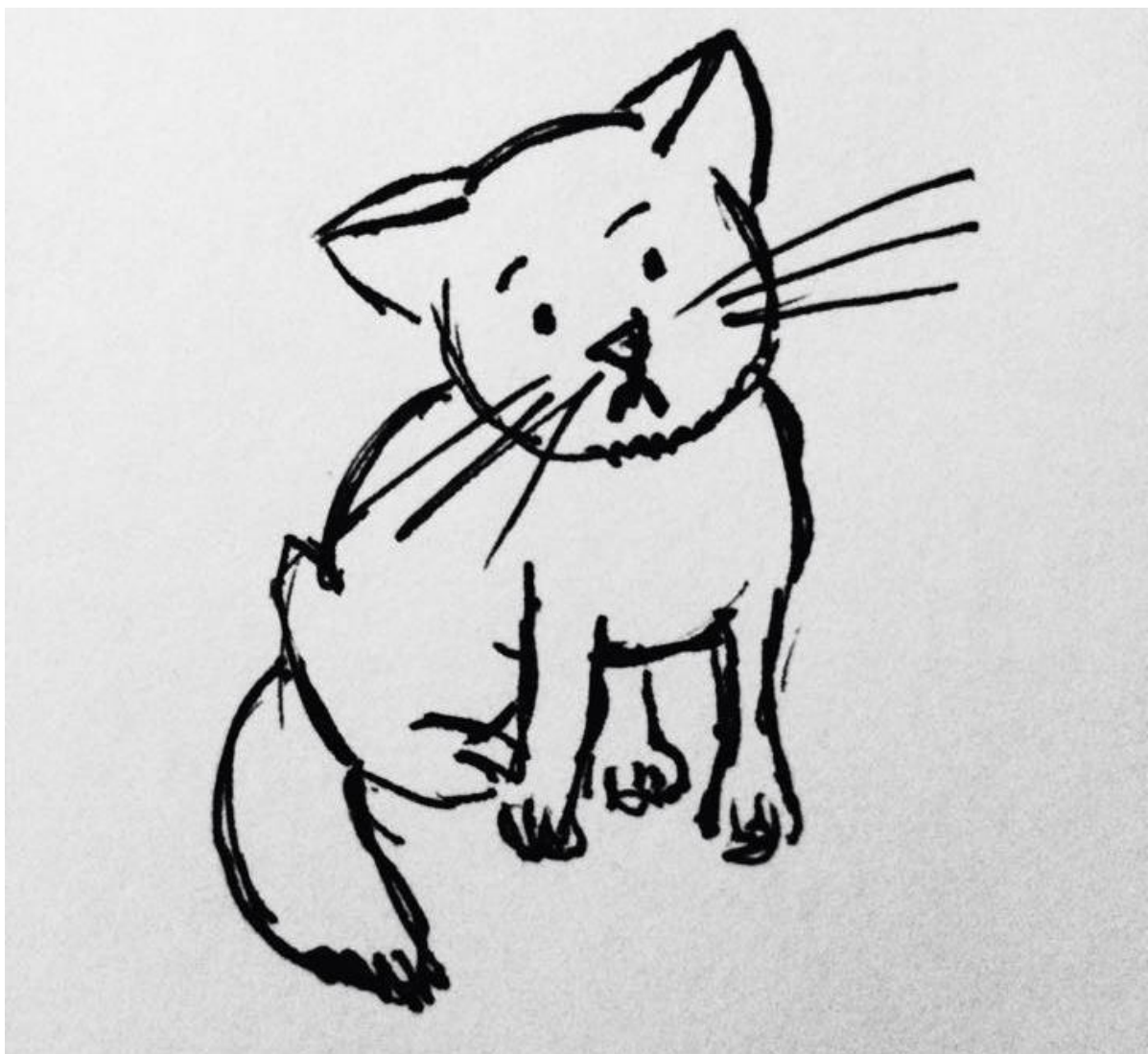
And finally in the morning I figure I may as well cum because... why? Because you want it. Because it'll signify an end to all this. And I'll go to work dirty and tired and worried and wait for the day to be over and cringe until I finally get home and bathe it all off myself and say - not again. Don't I know better?

Though in the morning you say one thing I like. You say: "your boots are really intimidating", and I say: "good." Because my boots can be everything I'm not. If I can't stick up for myself or even attempt to do what's best for me, then at least I can look like I'm tough, like I don't give a shit, like I'm *that* girl you don't fuck with.

And where is my feminism in all of this? No matter how much I read, think, discuss, write - it's not a cure.

And I can't tell my boyfriend because '*don't ask don't tell*' and I don't want to sit there on skype and say to him that I went home with somebody to prove to myself that I'm an autonomous individual who can do what she damn well likes, but I didn't like it, didn't want it, but didn't leave. And how can I say that when he was inside me I was thinking of you and wishing it was you and wondering what the hell I was doing there and can you comfort me because I half-fucked someone I shouldn't have and now I feel dirty and stupid and what the hell is the point of this polyamory thing anyway? What am I even doing? I don't know what I want - all I can articulate is what I don't and so I'm stuck stuck stuck and paralysed; the only movement I achieve is veering between loving you and rejecting you because I don't want to be stifled, but I want to love and be loved, so very badly.

Am I clean yet?



5.

This is a love poem to my imaginary girlfriend who represents in the sound programming language SuperCollider as the Unit Generator 'Dust2.ar'

Supercollider code is a language used to communicate with computers.

I guess I've been having problems communicating with actual people in the world sexually and romantically, so Dust2.ar is an expression of my very private despair/desire.

The code is how she visually can be experienced, and if one codes in SuperCollider, she can be heard as well by executing the code:

```
(  
  SynthDef("help-Dust2", { arg out=0;  
    Out.ar(out,  
    Dust2.ar(XLine.kr(11000, 2, 11), 0.5)  
  })  
}).play;  
)
```

my love for her

is a stochastic noise signal, a non-determinative time-series of flux;

of acceptance and desire.

the problem inherent to this model

is itself stochastic

the Dust (2.ar) in our shared throats shimmers

between noise and the noise signal and the purring pet bunnies of universal time.

6.

content note: non-consensual sex, intrusive thoughts, emotional abuse

I feel like my sexuality has been chipped away at over a number of years, and now I've reached a point where getting turned on is difficult. As a child and teenager I felt very sexual and had fantasies about girls and boys, from quite young. I used to think up fantasies in my head that made me feel aroused, a lost skill.

These days I have what you might call a low-sex drive. This mainly makes me feel embarrassed. I think people would assume I had a high one, because I'm interested in sexuality, and always, you know, going on about sex. I am not ashamed about sex, or talking candidly about my own sex life, apart from obviously this recent development of not really wanting to have it, or when I do having compulsive thoughts (like once when I was thinking 'rape, rape, rape' in my head when I was having sex.)

I feel like I'm wasting my body because I find it easy to achieve orgasms, once I am aroused, even from PIV sex. Or perhaps, I feel that I should be grateful that my male partner is interested in my pleasure and making me come.

The first time I had penis in vagina sex, which I thought of at the time as "losing my virginity" it wasn't very nice. I was very drunk and nervous, it was with a boy I'd been seeing, but who was in love with his ex-girlfriend, who he only broke up with because she "cheated on him". I remember that I told him I was a virgin and asked him if that was ok, which makes me cringe now. He said it was ok, but told me not to get attached to him, a half-joke I think. He indicated that he was going to put a condom on, maybe I told him too, I can't remember. The he put his penis inside my vagina, or tried to. I didn't really know what was going on but it hurt. He then gave up, I think I was completely passive, and left my halls of residence room, advising me to either lock the door or put my knickers on. In the morning I saw that he hadn't used a condom at all, as there were two condoms on my floor, which I recognised from his wallet, and were fully wrapped. He hadn't come inside me, but still I was worried and got the morning after pill. I was also pleased to not be a virgin anymore, and the pain in my vagina felt kind of noble, and experienced.

When I confronted him, he said he hadn't put a condom on 'cause his "willy wasn't ready". I was really confused at the time, but his hindsight think that he couldn't get an erection and was trying to put his penis in my vagina, to get himself hard. Anyway, after that I had no sexual contact with anyone else for like a year.

The next person I had sex with was "my first proper boyfriend", bleugh. He was incredibly manipulative and emotionally abusive. At first I told him that I didn't want to have sex because I was scared, so for ages he would just masturbate me and that was good. When we had piv sex, it just hurt all the time. Looking back, I think it was because I used to come from other types of sex before the p went in v. Anyway, sex on the whole was quite satisfying apart from this, but as with the rest of the relationship he was manipulative, he said that I didn't come on to him enough/initiate sex and that this made him feel rejected. He would sulk if I didn't want to have sex with him, so I would do it even though I didn't want to. I feel very sad about this now, like I was a poor little girl, obviously I wasn't I was twenty years old, but this is how I see myself. I cried in the shower in his parents' house after we had sex because I didn't want to, and there he was slamming on top of me. What use is it being sexually open, and a feminist, and being able to enjoy orgasms, when you don't even feel like you can say no.

Anyway, the worst thing that he did to me was something that I didn't really think of at the time, but now it gives me the fucking shudders and I hate him. We were on holiday with his parents, which

I didn't want to go on, because I didn't love him and didn't want to go out with him anymore, but he wouldn't let me break up with him. We were doing sex stuff, and he just put his penis in my vagina, without asking, and without a condom on. We only used condoms as contraception. I didn't want his penis in my vagina without a condom. Writing this I am worried in case this is normal, and I'm making a big deal about it, but I can't help it, when I think about this incident I imagine his stupid penis and feel sick. Because I didn't want it in me, but I didn't want to upset him I said something like, "oops", and he pulled out but was so annoyed at me. He said that he had never felt so insecure sexually because of the way I treated him.

I wanted to write about those incidents because they show when I lacked control over my own sexuality and what was happening to me. I feel like a lack of control has led to me feeling weird about sex now. Sometimes, I think that sex was better for me, when I was just doing it by myself.

I feel a massive pressure to be sexual, mainly coming from myself. I know that I'm a sexual person, but it's muffled under a weird blanket, which has developed over a few minor acts of violence I have experienced, even though they were years ago, and I have had non- abusive sex since.

7. *Why* I Didn't Ever Report

content note: rape, abuse

I might have been offwhite
He was effectively Grey
Higher class, more money, and a mean streak
I was curious, inexperienced
He'd seen the whole underbelly of the world
And groomed me
I couldn't say "no" because he "loved" me
And I couldn't say "abuse" because it was forbidden
And sometimes I wasn't even awake when he started
But that wasn't "rape" because I "liked" being awakened with non-consensual"sex"
The violence started with the quotation marks
And ended with another "accident"
But I'm the "crazy" one, the designated patient
Because he refused to ever see a doctor
And I never called the police
Because he never wanted a record
And I never wanted to get hurt again

8.

CONFESSIONS

OF A SEXUALLY DYSFUNCTIONAL
QUEER.



I'VE NEVER
HAD 'AMAZING
SEX'

I FEEL
SAD ABOUT
SEX.

I'VE ONLY HAD
SEX ABOUT 50
TIMES OR LESS

I DON'T UNDERSTAND
WHAT 'AMAZING SEX' IS

I'M PHOBIC OF
SEX.

SOMETIMES I WANT SEX
BUT THEN I GET UPSET
BECAUSE OF FLASHBACKS

I THOUGHT PAINFUL
SEX WAS NORMAL
UNTIL I WAS 28

THE 1ST TIME I SAW
QUEER PORN I WAS
29

I WANT A RELATIONSHIP

I GOT ANGRY WITH MYSELF
FOR NOT LIKING IT WHEN
SAID EX WOKE ME UP
WITH NON-CONSENSUAL
SEX AND WHEN HE HAD
SEX WITH ME WHEN I
WAS ASLEEP.

AND MOST OF THAT
WAS 'NON-CONSENSUAL
IN AN ABUSIVE
RELATIONSHIP.

9.

Queer festival. I had just twisted my ankle (while investigating the sex party), so I was trying to stretch it and keep it high on a nearby chair. A cis male appearing person who I've never met before started stroking my leg.

'Fuck,' I turned to my companion, a lesbian woman who I had met the same day and who invited me to hang out with her and her friends. 'What do I do?', pointing in the direction of the stranger.

'Umm, do you want to hook up with him?'

I shook my head vigorously.

'Then tell him you don't want him to touch you. Tell him you're a lesbian. Or something else. Do you want me to talk to him?'

We were pretty drunk at this point (hence the twisted ankle), so I didn't think twice about confronting the guy.

'Hey, my foot is pretty painful, do you think you can stop touching me?'

He moved closer.

'So, are you two dating?', he nodded towards my friend.

'No, I'm not dating anyone.'

'So would you like to come with me to the sex party room?'

I don't know why this conversation has been so stuck in my head for so long. It wasn't the first time I was invited to have sex with a stranger, or the last time. But maybe it was the first time after I had thought seriously about my sexuality and realised that I'd never enjoyed sex much. I have always gone for it, had sex with lots of people without second thought, on first dates and all of that, but because it was all meaningless, because it didn't matter to me. If the other person wanted it, ok, I'd do it. Didn't make me more sad, or more happy. I was never attracted physically to people, I couldn't see someone as 'sexy' or 'hot', just words that didn't describe anything. Sometimes after I got to know someone well, I'd find them attractive, but often by this point we had established a detrimental sexual relationship that I couldn't reconfigure to be more pleasurable, so eventually I'd end the whole thing. I heard later that some people call similar experiences demisexuality. I don't call it anything. My sexuality has only appeared with one person so far in my life. Far from any fairytale illusions of a prince on a white horse who finally made me horny, it was someone who actually spent time talking to me and getting to know me as a person, throwing away all hetero-patriarchal cis normativity that usually dictates the ways people see each other in our fucked up societies.

I think I also remember this conversation at that queer festival because it made me sad. It made me realise the pressure that is put on everyone to perform sexually. I tried explaining to people that I wouldn't fuck them because I was in love with someone, and that made me involuntarily monogamous (I just couldn't feel attraction to anyone else). Yeah, right. All I got back was Freudian bullshit about my repressed internalised sexuality that needed to be liberated. It is almost too obvious to draw a parallel between hetero/cis normativity in dominant society and compulsory sexuality in queer spaces. It's paradoxical, in a way, that we're trying to destroy the monogamous heterosexual family unit, whilst keeping the same view that it's 'natural' and 'normal' to want to fuck around (same 'natural' impulse that makes some people cheat on each other). And our anarchy consists of embracing our desires to fuck lots of people, liberating our sexualities, fucking people of all genders, doing polyamory, bondage, kink and all of that, anything but actually thinking critically what it means to create spaces where we can feel more accepted, more equal and not pressured to do anything. The idea of being queer/ activist/ anarchist/ feminist / (could insert any label really) for me is not to embrace another normativity (be

it queer/ activist/ anarchist), but to question every time when you spot it somewhere growing like the little fascist flower it is.

10. What my brain tells me about sex:

content note: anxiety, intrusive thoughts

(warning: thoughts may be distorted by socially constructed ideas about gender and sexuality)

- I am objectively Bad At Sex
- I shouldn't trust the people I fuck because they won't respect my boundaries
- I'm not kinky enough
- Having sex with me is boring and a chore
- I'm not actually queer
- People will have sex with me and it'll be boring and then they'll tell all their friends and everyone will laugh at me/pity me
 - No-one wants to have sex with me, now or in the future
 - If I take the initiative and ask people if they want to hook up, I'm actually just tricking them into thinking they'll have fun with me, when in reality it will be boring and disappointing
 - There's no point in even having sex because I've got RSI in my hands and I'm rubbish at oral sex and I don't know enough about kink so what will we even do?!
 - As soon as I have sex with a new person they will immediately realise I'm really inexperienced and be disappointed
 - Everyone else is having loads of fun, uncomplicated sex and they know what they want and how to talk about it
 - The things that I like in sex are boring and vanilla, and there's not much in general that I like anyway
 - If I go to a sex party people will take one look at me and know I'm there under false pretences and judge me and not want to hook up with me
 - I am unimaginative in bed
 - People I fuck will judge me negatively
 - If I don't love going down on people then I can't be a real dyke
 - No-one wants to have sex with an inexperienced baby queer who doesn't know what they're doing
 - No-one ever wants to make out with me at parties and it's because they can tell I'm frigid and boring
 - I have never enjoyed sex in the past and I will never enjoy sex again in the future
 - Sex is always difficult and stressful
 - I should have gotten over my anxieties by now and be a functioning, sexual adult

So how am I supposed to relax and enjoy having sex with someone when I have all this shit going on in my head? Why do I find it so easy to talk about other things that I do with my body and with other people's bodies that are sensual and pleasurable, but when it comes to explicitly sexual things I'm mute? Why do I hate myself so much? *(delete as applicable: patriarchy/abuse/internalised homophobia and transphobia/difficult childhood/mental health/neoliberalism)* I wish they taught you how to have sex at school - how are you even meant to know what to do when you fuck?! I don't like completely unstructured activities where you have no idea what's going to happen and you're meant to improvise as you go along (HI PERFORMANCE ANXIETY!) And yeah, I know you can go to workshops and stuff and learn those things as an adult now but also SOCIAL ANXIETY and EVERYONE WILL LOOK AT ME AND KNOW I'M A FRAUD and WHAT IF PEOPLE I KNOW ARE THERE AND

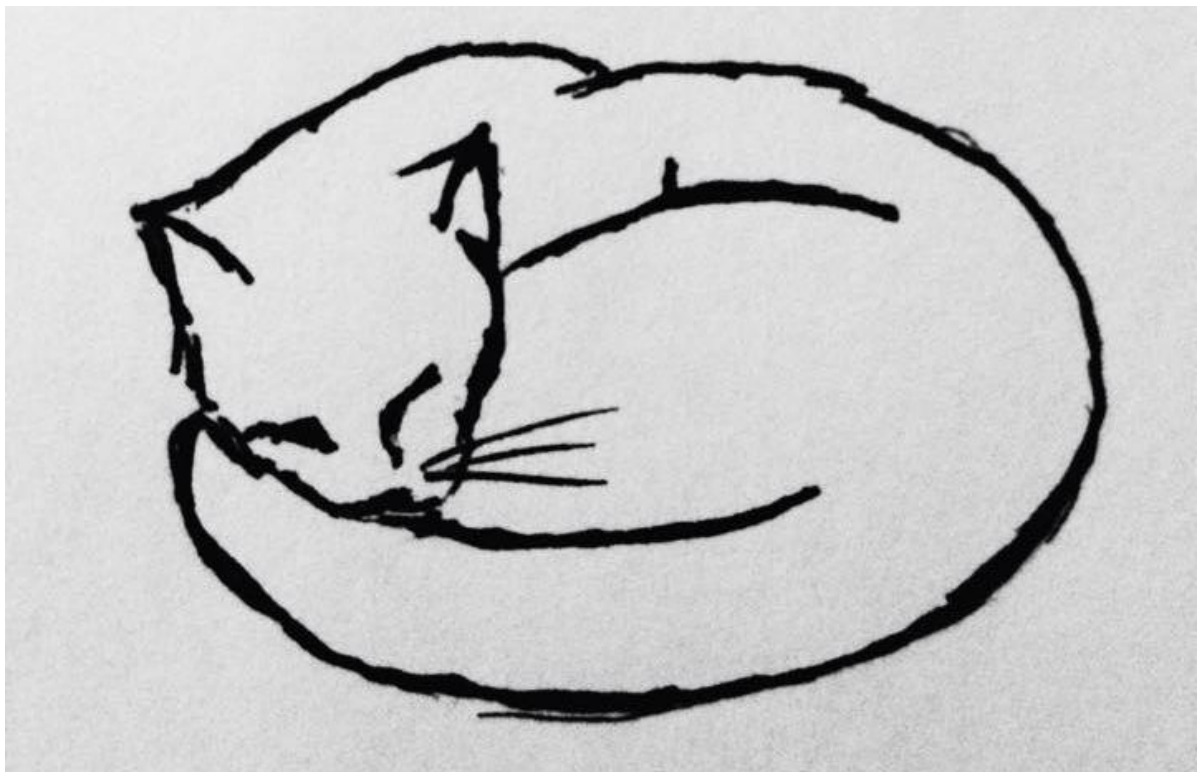
THEY'RE JUDGING ME?! Really what I want is a hot older babe who is super nice and empathic to take me under their sexy wing and teach me how to do all the sex things and not judge me and let me practice my fuck-skills with them but is that even a thing you can write on yr OkC profile?!

Sex is the one thing in society we're not allowed to be bad at, or not enjoy. You're not into climbing, or crafting, or cooking? You find them boring or you're just really terrible at them? That's fine, different people are into different things. But we can't admit that we're inexperienced and that we don't know what we're doing when we fuck and it's even more taboo to say maybe for me sex isn't like THE BEST THING EVER (although yeah I like touching bodies with people and I really dig sensual pleasure up until the point where we overtly name it as fucking, at which point I retreat and crumble inside myself, unable to frame it in those terms without placing a value judgement on it and becoming aware of the performativity of it all).

Oh and here's a big lol: when we published the first *FUCKED* a man on my facebook informed me that it was easy to have sex outside of patriarchy and that he'd been doing it for years and my god are you fucking kidding me? I wish he'd been able to explain how I escape this critical objectifying eye of the patriarchy which makes itself known as soon as we kiss. This *thing* which makes me hyper aware of my body and what I'm doing and makes me acutely analyse every touch, every corporeal interaction. I can't just switch off my anxieties like that although I'm practising mindfulness and occasionally yeah I 'lose myself' or whatever but I want those mindless, embodied physical fuck feelings and *le petit mort* and maybe even *jouissance* (ha) but all I have is awkwardness and tears and I can't form the words to tell you what I want and I'm trapped in my head reliving trauma and telling myself that I'm shit and that you're bored and I wish that I wasn't fucked but all evidence points to the contrary. I took c. e.'s advice and gave up on sexual optimism but all I'm left with now is pain and loneliness and fear and I'm fucking bored of it, and I'm angry, and I hate the culture that's made me this way but I don't know what to do with these feelings and liberation seems an impossibility. I want to enjoy sex as a fuck-you to my past, to society, but there's so much pressure on it now that any kind of pleasure is always already precluded. So instead I write zines with theorybro references and get deeper into astrology and witchcraft and it's all a kind of self-help or self-care and I try to embrace the non-teleological aspects of life and 'healing from trauma' but maybe it's all a deflection and I'm just talking out my arse and all I really need is - as men on the internet are fond of telling feminists - a good fuck.

[I tried to write a conclusion to this piece but there's nothing to conclude, there are only ever more feelings]

The heady, intense, turbulent and overwhelming feelings which come from having both yr Moon and Mars in Scorpio



11.

content note: rape, sexual assault

I was 15 or 16, attending a feminist conference on a college campus in my hometown.

One of the workshops offered was titled something along the lines of Sex Positive Feminism. It had a warning: Live Sex Demonstration included, no one under 18 allowed. There was no other explanation aside from this, but I think the words “sex demonstration” alone was enough to intrigue everyone. I snuck in and sat through the workshop with my kind, patient, vanilla-as- could-be boyfriend. I sat as they locked the doors and the sense of panic set in.

Sat and watched a tall woman tie up a small man, put a ball gag in his mouth, then fuck him up the ass with a strap-on. Sat and listened to my friends talk about what sex acts they liked, or would want to try, and shrank into the background as I started to feel smaller and smaller. I knew then that whatever sex positive feminism was, it wasn't for me.

As soon as it was over, I started to cry. “I want to go home,” I told my boyfriend. I felt broken, abnormal, and defeated. No one was threatening me now, all the bad shit was behind me. So why did I feel so threatened?

Years later, I told S. I didn't want to sleep with him because sex hurt me too much physically. I told him about the rapes and the disassociation and the pattern with my last boyfriend, both of us drinking two forties a night in order to have sex. Sex was a chore, at best. I loved and desired him, but I was unsure about sleeping together. All I knew was that I felt like I should be having sex in order to be the liberated Women's Studies Major I made myself out to be.

“Shhh, it's ok,” S. said, putting my head on his chest. “Bad people broke you.”

It killed me to hear him say those words.

I'd spent so much time convincing myself that I WASN'T broken, or at least that I was fixed now, I didn't need him to spell it out for me. Spurred by his words, I did everything I could think of to “fix” myself. I was a model survivor. I went to therapy. I read books. I listened to Bikini Kill and desperately needed to believe Kathleen Hanna when she sang *I believe in the radical possibilities of pleasure, babe*.

But here's what they don't tell you: sometimes you will get the courage to tell your gynaecologist that sex hurts and she will dismiss it by telling you that it's because you have a small vagina and so that will be the last time you go to the gynaecologist for many years.

Sometimes you will try to masturbate and even your own hands will feel like sexual assault, will feel like unwanted touch.

Sometimes you will date girls because you have some stupid idea that it's safer and they will make you feel just as threatened and they will ignore your nos and you'll feel like you have to kiss them, to just give them something so you don't have to give them everything.

What they don't tell you: healing isn't a linear process, it's more cyclical. Sometimes sex is ok and good and sometimes it's boring and you're indifferent to it and sometimes it is awful.

When you lose your virginity at a young age to rape, it is hard to tell the difference between your genuine sexuality and the

distorted thing it becomes. It is very difficult to tell what you really want when pain/pleasure and love/hate are so intertwined.

What they don't tell you is that you might feel totally alienated when everyone around you is fucking each other, trying new things, and wanting to talk about it. And you want to encourage women to talk about their sexual experiences, you think there's something badass about women and queer people talking boldly and unashamedly about sex, but it hurts too. Because all you have to contribute is sad stuff, and you wouldn't want to bring anyone down.

What else they don't tell you: you may continue to feel ambivalent about sex, even with love and orgasms and smiles and fun. And sometimes you will think that the only reason you have sex is to spite your rapist, to prove that he couldn't ruin sex for you.

I'm not sure how I feel about sex now/identify sexually (and maybe it will change), but I know that I will never be a freewheeling lady who has lots of casual sex or sex with strangers. I feel envious of my friends who go to sex parties and are in poly relationships or are up on Tinder all night. I envious of anyone who can treat sex as a light thing, when for me it is such a loaded concept. It is so hard for me to find even ONE person that I want to have sex with and to trust them enough to have sex and then to continue trusting them and feel like I am not being used/they don't have ulterior motives.

I want a world where I don't feel all this pressure to be a sexpositive rape survivor success story. My story didn't end with mind-blowing crazy kinky sex and empowered sexuality, and that's ok.

12.

Dating...

A TALE ABOUT DATING WHEN YOU ARE QUEER AND HAVE PROBLEMS WITH SEX.



THE END.

13. Bodily Interference

content note: intrusive thoughts

I'm planning to wake up really early tomorrow to get myself to the Camberwell Sexual Health Centre because I had sex with someone I don't know the detailed sexual history of. I've had sex with three people in my life: my friend when she was drunk and on her period, my current boyfriend, and this girl I met the other week.

My current boyfriend is the only one of those three I've had sex with more than once. We've been in a relationship for three years, and we have sex about once every four months.

I've never had an orgasm. I get *quivery* when I masturbate, but I have never gotten quivery from any sort of sex.

My boyfriend and I realised last Christmas that we weren't sexually jealous and it felt pretty natural to have a sexually open relationship. We are best friends, and we live together, and sex is not a big part of our relationship.

I really enjoy going to DOMO1 and kissing girls. The first time felt absolutely amazing, and the second time was nice, and both times I felt weirdly powerful - it feels odd to write that - it's something I've never felt before, of it being out of control and being in control at the same time. I left without saying good-bye both times.

The other week I went to a lesbian night and kissed a girl, and it didn't quite feel like that, but I went along with it anyway, and gave her my number, and we met up. I kept thinking about that night the following Saturday when I was in the "can't fuck/won't fuck" workshop at AFem.²

¹ DOMO was a regular London-based queer club night

² AFem was an anarchist-feminist conference held in London in 2014

She and I, when we met up, didn't kiss or hold hands, and we watched a movie at her house, and I said, "I think I'm going to go home now." It went pretty quickly from there, and soon we were both naked. I hadn't been able to eat all night because I'd felt sick. It could have been nerves.

In the past, with boys, it had got to this point of kissing on a bed, and I'd go completely rigid - I'd just freeze and it would stop there. But that night, I was shaking and shivering but carried on with it anyway. I wasn't drunk. I was clear-thinking on an empty stomach and, I'm not sure why, but it just all carried on going along. I asked, when we were taking our underwear off, about STIs, and she said she'd been tested three weeks ago.

At around two thirty, we decided to go to sleep. Only I couldn't sleep. For some reason my mind was going 450 mph thinking - STI STI STI like my blood cells were going to implode that instant. She said, "it's really rare to transmit STIs through lesbian sex," but I keep thinking - of course she'd say that! I have a hot shower, and still not being able to sleep, text my boyfriend who says if I'm that worked up I should just come home.

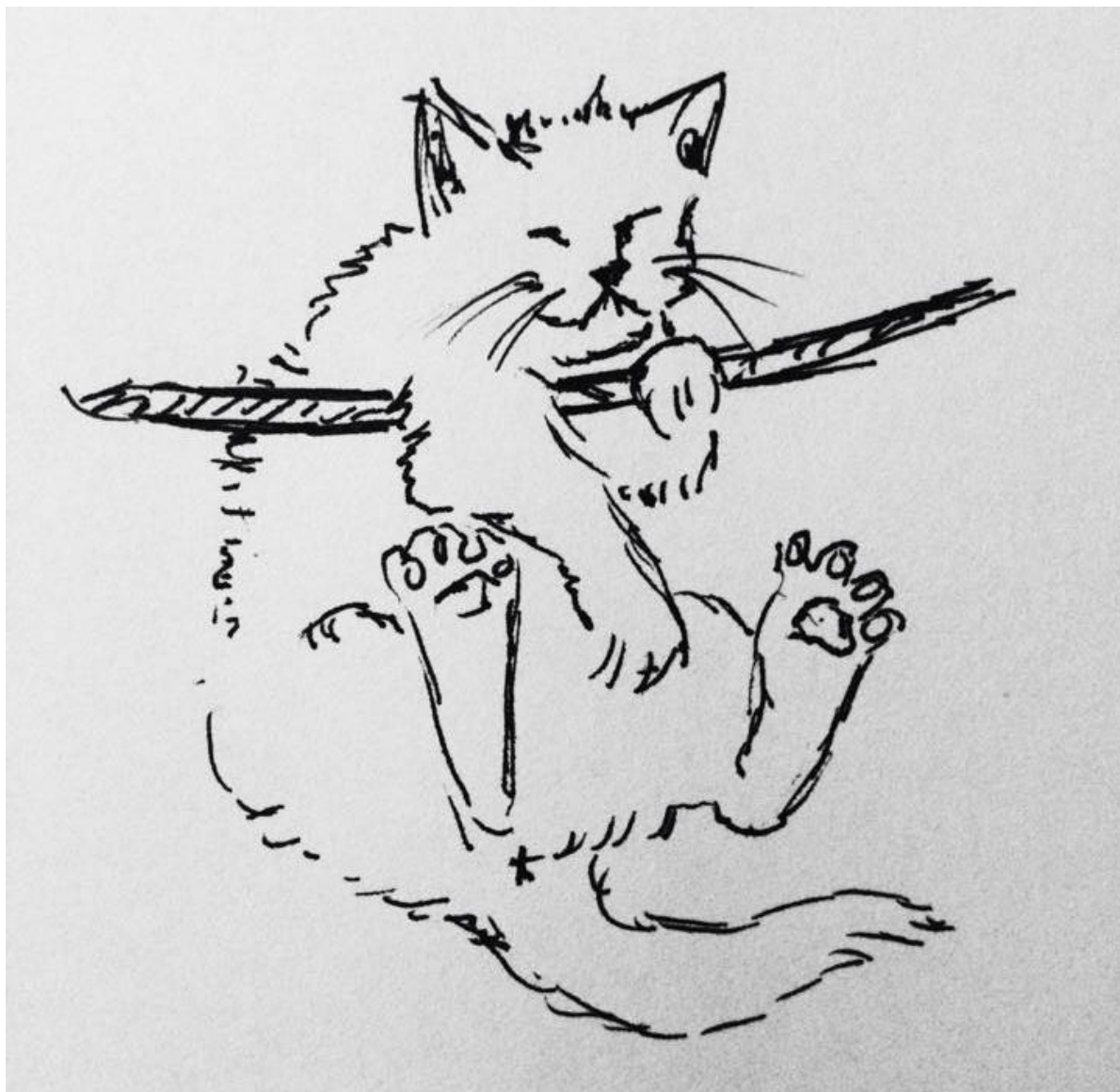
So I leave, and forget my wallet there, and go back, and finally make it on to a bus. At home, I still can't sleep, so I google STIs and it makes it all worse.

Thinking about her makes me incredibly nervous. I almost met up with her again, but didn't.

The experience got me thinking about when I first had sex with my boyfriend. He is the only boy I've ever had sex with, but I felt safe and comfortable with him. We'd been seeing each other for three months, and he knew I'd never had sex with a boy before. He waited for me to say it was ok. I don't remember shivering.

My conundrum is this: I want to figure out a whole bunch of things - what I'm doing wrong when I masturbate - what my sexual orientation might be - why I can't orgasm - what works for me (having a different person go down on me was revelatory, for example) - I'm curious about sexual experiences, and it's annoying I can't actually feel anything - but I can't just sleep with people I've just met.

The other night was traumatic, and I never want to sleep with someone I don't know really well ever again. But getting to know other people and building relationships with them would be stepping on the territory of the relationship I have with my boyfriend. I wouldn't feel comfortable doing that.



14.

content note: rape, sexual abuse, incest, intrusive thoughts

So I could tell you about the 7 times i have been raped by various men ranging in levels of brutality. since i was 13 - 22yrs old... Or the numerous times i've been molested by filthy old men... Or How the first woman to touch me after i came out as a Lesbian, raped me while i was trying to sleep.

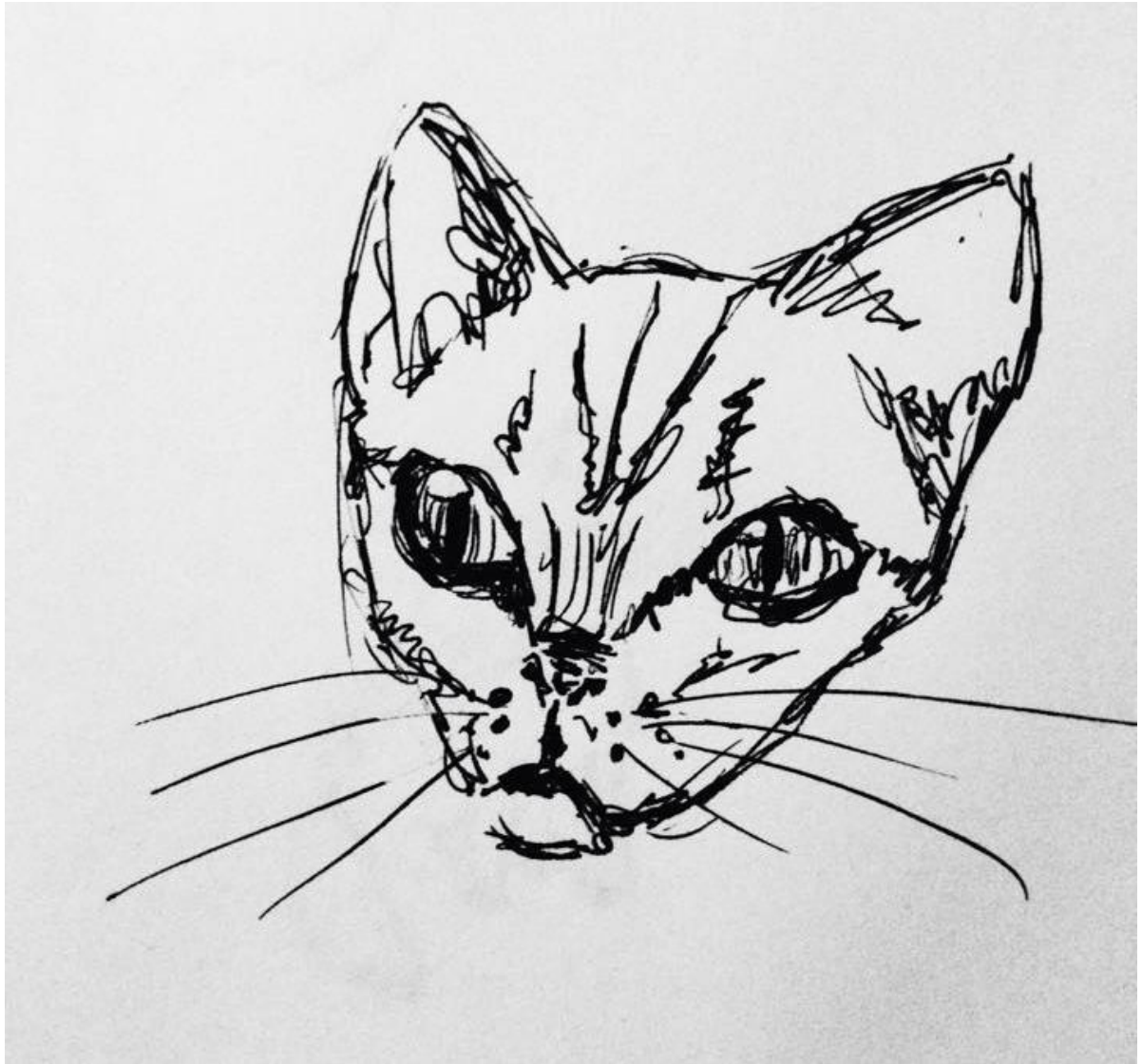
I could tell you about my work as a dominatrix where i am paid to whip and humiliate Men at their request & how sometimes i see the faces of my abusers!.. Or how sometimes i wish i had a stun gun or more lethal weapon and could just go around "vigilante style" Protecting women and fighting crime like an outlaw superhero suited in latex, like in some fantasy comic book.

But it's the ORGASMS that Fuck with my mind! Not that i can't have them, on the contrary, i can have many, 10times in a row without breaks. I have an extremely high sex drive and an extremely large & sensitive Clit but because (despite being Queer) i dislike having sex out of a monogamous committed relationship it's proved hard to find a lover who can keep up with my appetite. Alas in the past i've had a tendency to fall in love with people with low sex drives. (silly heart o'mine)

What scares me though is what happens when i Orgasm, my mind becomes awash with all the thoughts i don't want to have. Painful thoughts about my Partner cheating on me with my best friends or with their exes. Thoughts of all my deepest Fears (Even being raped by my father) will always guarantee to bring me to Orgasm. & often i will Cry afterwards & be in a Huge shaking mess for hours because it is so painful in my mind to feel these thing i hate, these thing i fear the most!

These days during masturbation i will stop before climaxing and force my mind to think of pleasant things but during sex with a partner i can't control it.

What scares me is i am the type of crazy spiritual person who believes that An Orgasm is a powerful tool for Magical manifestation. Most every time i have 'Come' thinking of my fears they have manifested They have "Come True". and Believe me i have tried so hard not to bring them into my reality But nevertheless i've been betrayed & backstabbed or harmed by all the people i envision during orgasm. Did i manifest this? Was i prophesying the future? Or am i just Fucked!



15. *Asexual Candy Hearts*

Be my non-hegemonic, experimental, love-partner.
Criticize my poem because love is a word that sounds sweet but tastes like nothing.
Touch me even though I won't feel it.
Touch me until I feel it.
Subvert and destroy social conventions with me.
Turn me on with your thoughts on societal roles and the true definition of femininity.
Spend several days hungover with me so we can get drunk again.
Wear my skin, let me wear yours.
Cut off my hair.
Let's make each other feel like people.
Let's make each other feel like ideas.
Share my memories.
Tear apart my preconceived notions.
Waste my time and I'll never forget it.
I'll pay you to sit down next to me for a little while.
Get fat and go bald with me.
Squeeze my cerebral cortex.
Kiss my hippocampus.
Lay next to me, too sad to talk, until the melancholy passes and we can go outside.
Live under my rock.
Be the rock I live under.
Don't be mine and I won't be yours because we both know damn well it's all a construct and people shouldn't feel stuck to each other.
Ignore me.
You go be you and I'll go be me and maybe we can be each other together someday.
Make me feel like a straight boy.
Don't hate yourself and I won't hate me.
Eat all of my food.
Read my notebooks without my consent but the handwriting is too messy and you won't get anything out of it.
I don't know what I want but it can be whatever you want.
Be hairy with me.
Laugh at straight people with me.
Laugh at gay people with me.
Laugh at me with me.



16.

Sexusociety: The goal of this term was to parallel heteronormativity on the sexual axis. If heteronormativity draws our attention to “the institutions, structures of understanding, and practical orientations that make heterosexuality seem not only coherent - that is, organized as a sexuality - but also privileged” - as Berlant and Warner put forth in 1998 - then sexusociety attempts to mark the centrality of sex and sexuality in our culture and the ways in which we have come to organize our practices of joy and loving, life and fulfilment as well as institutional structures around conceptualizations of the sexual imperative.

- Ela Przybylo, 2013
(in an interview with asexualagenda.wordpress.com)

#6everalone

The Library of Unconventional Lives

2Fucked 2Furious: still sexually dysfunctional in sex-positive queer scenes
February 25, 2015

<fuckedzine.tumblr.com/post/112050652926/2fucked-2furious-still-sexually-dysfunctional-in>

thelul.org